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The BYSTANDER

Christmas Number 1933

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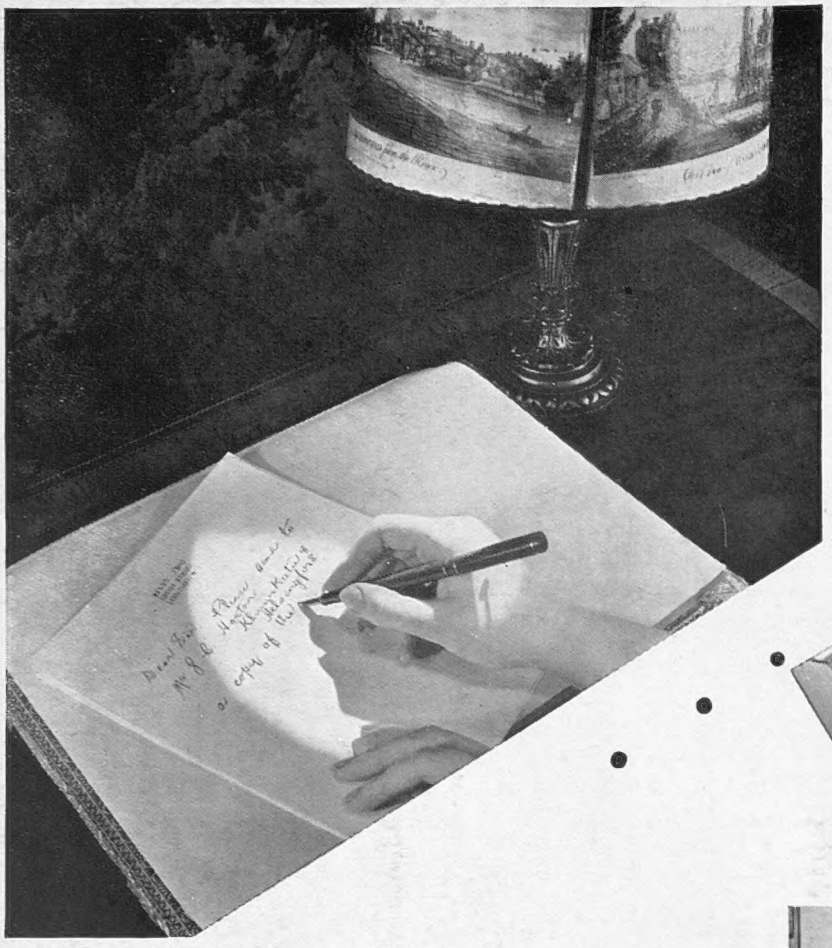

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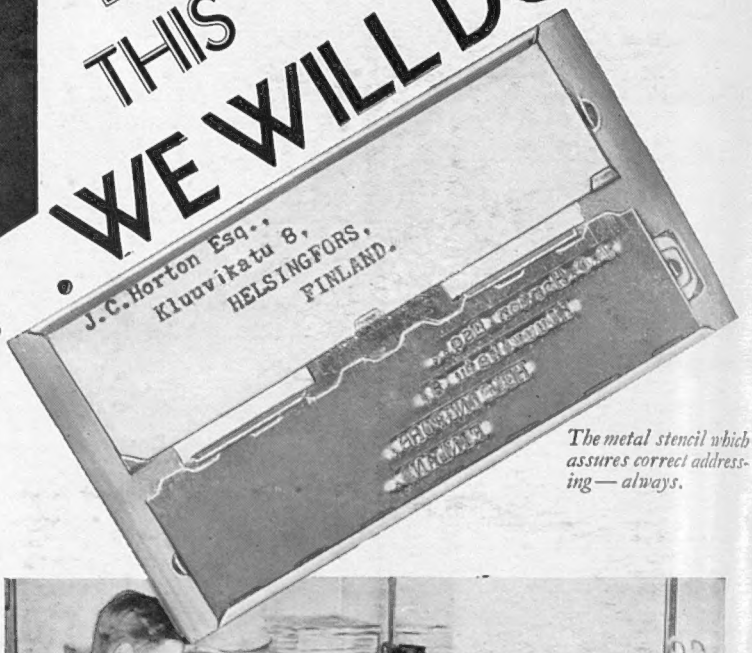

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THE BYSTANDER

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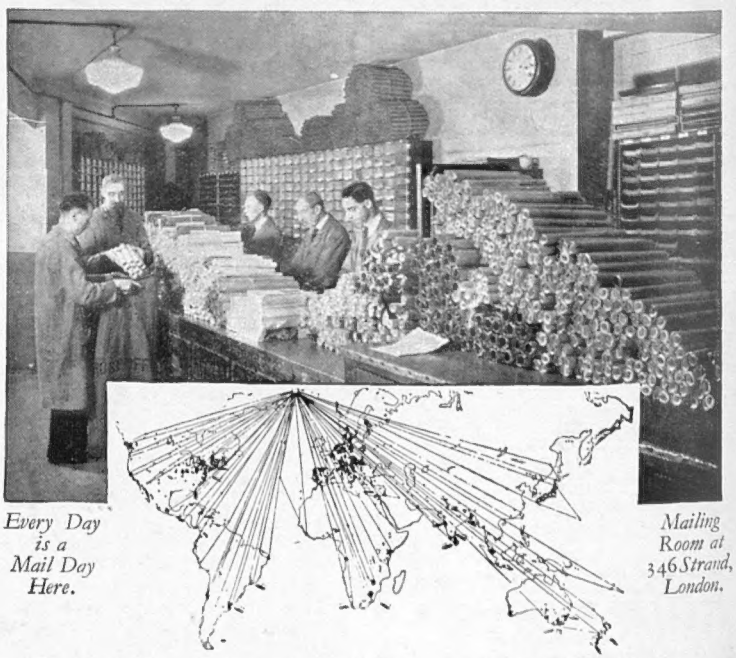

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Come off the YULE STANDARD

By The Authors *and* Artist *of* "1066 and All That"

This week's gardening tip was to get a medium-sized fir-tree

I.—WE ASK YOU!

IF you approached a man at any normal season of the year and told him in broad blood, deadly daylight, earnest Injun, and other Right but Repulsive circumstances, that this week's Gardening Tip was to *get a medium-sized fir-tree and plant it in the middle of the drawing-room*, and that things were pretty quiet in Bloomsbury just now, but in all the steadier places people were busy trying to *balance tedium-sized candles on the sloping branches* of these indoor trees and tying *tissue-paper parcels next to the candles and then lighting them*, and that if nothing came of that the people were prepared to *set fire to the entremets* at dinner, and later, turn out all the lights and *burn the dessert as well*, and that Firemen and Insurance Brokers all over the country were literally winking and blinking and high-jinking at all this, and that people as unlikely as Mr. Jacob Epstein and the Editor of the *Architectural Review* were at that very moment desperately engaged in *constructing pink-paper concertinas* (under the direction of Mr. Concert Lambent) and agreeing with their wives that pictures look much better hung crooked with holly sticking out than just left hanging straight without any holly; and if, on top of that, you informed the man that, in your opinion, it would be a Good Thing if he *invited all his relations to lunch on the same day* and fed them on a huge three-months'-old leaden sludge-cake or *plumb-pudding*, plugged with *thimbles and threepenny-bits*, and that after eating all those even his most dismal relatives would be anxious to *pull crackers* and *kiss any strange females they could catch* . . .

But at this point, taking his cue from the word "crackers," the man would depart, breathing deeply and crisply and evenly through the nose . . .

And presently *They* would come. With a plain van. And take you away . . .

II.—DOMICIDAL MANIACS

And that would be the right answer. Because, judged by any standard but their own, these Tom-yuleries and plum-fooleries, these self-conscious jollifications and hollifications, are nothing more nor less than symptoms of a recurrent domicidal mania, of an annual epidemic of cerebro-tinselitis (accompanied by waves of delirium-treemens) which is non-certifiable only because, during the critical weeks, all the doctors are down with it themselves.

People as unlikely as Mr. Jacob Epstein and the Editor of the "Architectural Review" were . . . constructing pink paper concertinas . . .

Like most lunatics, the Yule-hog is very cunning. When faced with his own follies he defends himself desperately with white lies, red herrings, pink concertinas, and other misleading gadgets.

He says that it is all *traditional, Druidical, Canonical, thimbolical*—in fact, justifiably Romantic. It isn't true. The whole thing is hysterical, Early Victorian; in short, *utterly marsupial*.

It is not historical. Mr. George Morrow was not playing the game when he suggested that Snapping the Dragon, Antirrhinoceros, etc., were forgotten mediæval sports; and Mr. Douglas Byng is wrong in his belief that Chaucer wrote a poem called "Chrystmasse Day in Ye Workhouse"; and there is no truth in the theory that the Druids used to torture their human sacrifices by kicking them under the Middle-toe, or that the Ancient Britons used to seize their captives by the head and feet and pull them in half for the pleasure of hearing them go pop!—and seeing who would get the biggest half.

And it is certainly not Christian. No theologian will admit that the Early Fathers of the Church used to dress up as Father Christmases to amuse their Early Children. And if Nero did accuse the Christians of starting the fire of Rome, no one has ever accused them of having done it by accident while fiddling with candles and tissue-paper parcels down in the secret Catapults or Patacombs, or whatever they were.

III.—THEY WENT CRACKERS

On the contrary, the sordid truth about the origin of this dreadful Yule-time and Yule-tide which lays wait (Waits, etc.) for Everyman is as follows: (1) *Sundays in the Middle Ages were Fundays. But by the end of*

There is no truth in the theory that the Druids used to torture their human sacrifices by kicking them under the Middle-toe

the Eighteenth Century, Sunday had become a Wan Day, a Dun day, a day of Dundreary National boredom. (2) *Gradually it dawned upon our Early Victorian Fathers that, at a period when Sunday was more terribly Sunday than it had ever been before, right at the most Dundreary season of the year, an extra Sunday had crept into the Calendar.*

The evidence was irrefutable; men in bed with headaches, children and women toddling off to Church in the morning; shops shut; lunch inflated; everyone asleep at three in the afternoon; the British Museum closed; nothing to do but eat and sleep and fug and play the harmonium . . .

They couldn't stick it. They went crackers; and concertinas; and Calendars.

Above all things, calendars. Why is it, do you suppose, that every year as Christmas approaches people start asking one another anxiously: "What day of the week is Christmas this year?" You must have noticed it; how they put a bold face on it and proclaim openly, to console one another, that Christmas will be, say, a Tuesday, or a Wednesday, this year.

In their hearts they know that it will be, will be, always will be—a Sunday. And already the brainstorm is upon them. Already they have begun secretly to collect the annual Heath Family Robinson Trousseau of piffling little hollified boxes and twiddling little bundles of jollified string. Some are making vague lists and subconsciously losing them in blotters; others are making themselves vaguely blotto and subconsciously losing themselves in labyrinths of cotton-wool; or gazing at red dressing-gowns with a wild surmise . . .

Right in the most Dundreary season of the year, an extra Sunday had crept into the calendar

IV.—THE HYSTERIA REPEATS ITSELF

Every year the neurosis returns; and as they feel the crisis approaching, thousands of unhappy victims, crazy to propitiate the Dreadful Spirit of Wassail, start deluging their life-long friends and long-life relations (not to mention their inveterate enemies and illiterate nephews and implacable next-door-neighbours-in-law) with things which nobody out of Bedlam could ever possibly want—strike-me-pink match-boxes, and jot-me-down diaries, with insulting messages burnt on them or dug into them, such as, "Scratch Me!" or "What can I forget to-day?"—and Bags, hundreds of Bags, little handy bags for casual shopping and little dandy bags for casual dropping, dogbags to hold dogs, handbags to hold hands, bigbags to hold little bags to hold bagatelles—and forget-me-not cards in thousands, decorated with blue ribbons and red robins or invincibly-regimental crests or indefensibly-sentimental jests, or just those downright-dishonest pictures of clean snow in England which have done more than anything else to drive Londoners out to Switzerland . . .

A well-filled stocking

And it still goes on . . .

V.—LET US DEFLATE

Well—and what is to be done about it? You cannot abolish Christmas: it has been tried. In 1644 the Cromwellians abolished it. But it came back again* with Charles II., who was a Merry Monarch and a Caroline, and liked having Trees about the house (to remind him of old times) and was always rather partial to a well-filled stocking.

And, in any case, we dare not abolish Christmas altogether now, for fear of the economic consequences of the ensuing Peace—for fear of unemployment in the Seasonal Riddle Industry, or a Three-penny-bit Glut at the Royal Mint, or a general strike of Swiss Guides.

But enough. If one cannot abolish Christmas, at least one might *deflate it* a bit.

If all men and women of good will who agree with us that Christmas à la Dickens is not worth the candles would only combine to form a Grand

* Except, of course, in Scotland, where they went the whole Hogmanay and abolished the thing permanently and sing "Yule tak' the High Road" to this day.

International Scrooge Society, with local Associations of Santa-claustrophobes (or Noël-cowards) in every Yule-ridden country, one might succeed in knocking a lot of the stuffing (pudding, carolling, etc.) out of December the Twenty-fifth and inserting a little domestic peace instead.

We therefore declare this excellent Society open and invite you to join forthwith by *filling up the excellent form on this page* and posting it, together with your excellent p.o. for £500 (or somebody else's if you like), to the Hon. Treasurers (whose names modesty forbids us to mention), c/o The Editor of THE BYSTANDER. Alternatively, you could cut out the form, and *send it to any friend* who obviously is cut out himself for special service, such as a *thin damp sort of friend*, or a *Field-Marshal* (see section (*f*) in the form).

There is no time to lose: Volunteers are urgently needed for the Society's work: Funds, for funding the Society's preliminary debts, repairing the Secretary's extraordinary boobts, etc.

Gifts of old red dressing-gowns, old Christmas Annuals, etc., may be sent to the League of Nations; they are just the sort of thing the Society detests.

Come on, then. Get the idea of pulling things in half out of your head and start pulling yourself together. Prepare to deflate by Christmas Numbers in no time.

Now! Once more. Straight up you go and sign on the d.....d line!

THE END

"Yule tak' the high-road"

ASSOCIATION OF SANTA - CLAUSTROPHOBES
ALL ENGLAND BRANCH of the SCROOGE SOCIETY

Application Form

Surname .....Christmas Name (if Wenceslas, don't mention it).....

Where and what your Dwelling (if Underneath a Mountain, Come out)

.....

Occupation (if peasant, don't write "pheasant").....

I/YOU, the undersigned/the undersized, etc. (scratch out whatever you like, don't like, etc.), DECLARE that I am/you are definitely right off the Yule Standard and determined to Deflate Christmas as far as possible: will do anything to help; consider myself/you specially fitted for the following Special Services, for the following Special Reasons:—

I am/you are—

(a) A thin, damp kind of man suitable for creeping into crackers and moistening the explosive.

(b) A mattress stuffer / Bernard Shaw and would like to buy up / shave off all those long white false beards and use them / burn them.

(c) A dark-skinned man in a brown suit and should / would not be noticed worming way deeply, crisply, and evenly into pudding to extract thimbles, etc.

(d) A professional bigamist and have tons of spare confetti for plugging the holes in aertex sweet-socks so that the leetle children cannot see the sweets (ha-ha!).

(e) An Oxford Blue / A Cambridge Bluestocking and but am prepared to PUT THE WAIT 230 YDS. in any direction / refrain from hanging myself on end of bed on Christmas Eve.

(f) A Naval Officer / A Field-Marshal and volunteer to disguise myself as / counter-attack the Postman and deliver parcels wrong (wrong parcels, etc.) / knock him into a cocked hat.

(g) Usually tight on Christmas Day and am likely to / certain to make a nuisance of myself to everybody, and deflate Christmas a lot.

(h) A Turkey and all I can say is / you seem to do is gobble, gobble, gobble . . .

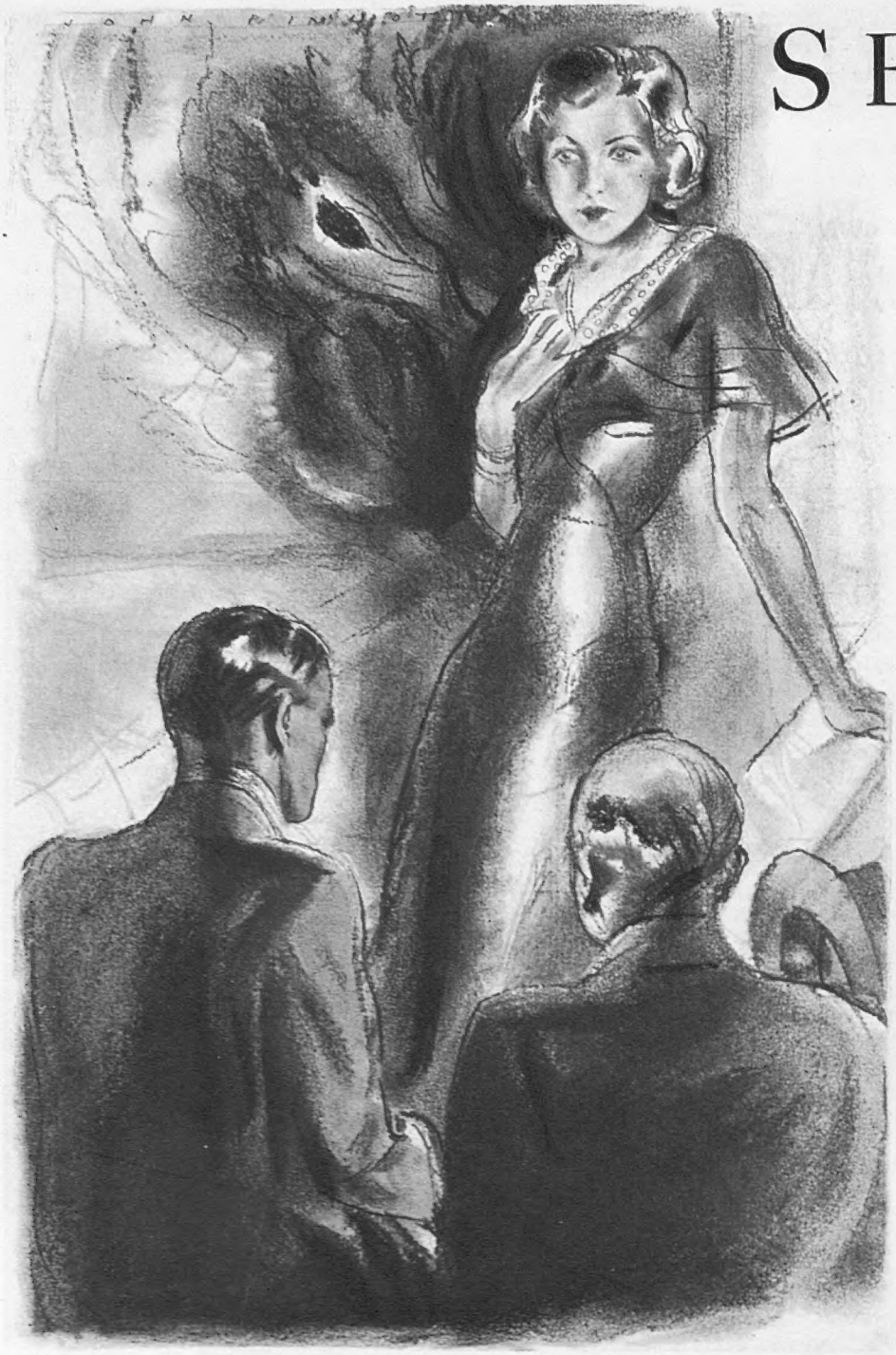
I certify that all the above-stated particulars are (to the best of my knowledge) stated above and am (to the best of my knowledge) YOURS IN BLOCK CAPITALS

usual signature..... unusual signature..... (just for a change)

Post this form at once to the Hon. Sec. Int. Scrooge Soc., c/o The Editor of THE BYSTANDER, or send it to your friend, enemy, or uncle instead of Christmas Card or Calendar.

(d) *Plug the holes*

(e) *Put the Wait*



"There's been an accident? Not . . . . ?"

SECOND

Illustrations by John Pimlott

THERE was a light mist, and the partridges came over sudden and low. Waiting for the third drive, we were posted along a ragged hedgerow, from which sucker thorns crept out here and there into the pasture. One of these, standing pretty tall, threw up its light screen between Horrocks and Paterson. Paterson, who was our host and a careful sort of fellow, might have called out "Mind me" to Horrocks, since they were partly concealed from one another; I saw him wave his hand at the half-leafless barrier, but Horrocks gave a quick nod to show he 'd marked him.

We heard the beaters calling in the distance, and fixed our eyes on the top of the high hedge. I was stood back a bit. I had a sudden qualm, opened my gun, and, sure enough, I 'd scooped up the top of an ant-hill, crossing the rough. It was too late to cut a twig to clear it before the birds came; I resigned myself to being only a spectator till this lot was over.

The beaters called nearer; everyone was watching tensely for the sudden burst of birds. Several coveys had shot over unscathed that morning, those that moved far ahead of the drive; silent, they appeared and disappeared in the same second in the mist. The utmost concentration was necessary, especially for these unflurried, silent, advance birds.

I was amused at the attitudes of my fellow-guns. I could see Nichols, Paterson, and Horrocks. Nichols and Paterson were staring each at the top of a particular sapling as if the birds must come there and nowhere else. Nichols was unconsciously making horrible play with his upper lip and his false teeth; Paterson's nose twitched. Horrocks was either more or less at ease than the others. His glance flickered about a little; I saw it switch over to where Paterson stood, on the other side of the buckthorn. Then, just at the last moment, he changed his stance, moving some feet nearer to our host. We were pretty near together already, on account of the weather and the lie of the land.

A covey swung over the far end of the line; we heard three cracks, and knew the fun was beginning. A beater cried "Mark over!" quite surprisingly near; the birds, well spread out, slanted over Horrocks's head, curving towards our host. Horrocks got one while they were above him, swung his gun down after another, and fired. Paterson collapsed, with the greater part of Horrocks's lead in his head, for this was choke barrel, and fired at under twenty yards. Now, that bird was twelve feet or more above Paterson when Horrocks fired, and Horrocks was a first-class shot.

A keeper tore off to the road, where his motor-bike was, to fetch a doctor. It was hopeless; though Paterson was still breathing, he was obviously dying fast. We stood about; Horrocks sat down with his head in his hands: I thought, through his fingers, his eye might be flickering at me as it had flickered at Paterson. He 'd looked and seen me staring a split second after he 'd pulled the trigger.

I opened my mouth to say "This was intentional," but closed it again. What shadow of proof was there, and, without proof, what was the good? We waited by the yellow hedge, and Paterson died, and the doctor came, and the keepers brought a sheep hurdle, and we filed back to the house.

"My God!" said Horrocks. "For heaven's sake, one of you go ahead and break the news to Rosie. I can't face her at once. Impossible, for both of us. I 'll go in by a side way."

I spoke to young Stevens. We two were the most intimate friends of the Patersons. "Come on, Bob; you and I had better do it."

"You fellows go slow," I said to the keepers. "You 'd better stop in the shrubbery till you see one of us come out on the steps. A man doesn't look too pretty when he 's been killed by a shot-gun."

We drew ahead. It was still a mile to the house. I said nothing for the first five minutes; neither did Bob. He was thinking of what to say to Rosie; I was thinking of what to say to him. At last I said:

BARREL

The first shot was an accident—done on purpose—the second . . .

By John Collier

(Author of "His Monkey Wife")

"Look here, Bob, will you hold your tongue and be guided by me as to what I 'm going to tell you ? "

"Well, what is it ? Yes, I will," he said.

"That was murder." I told him exactly what I had seen. "You noticed how almost the first thing he said afterwards was 'Why didn't he call out and let me know where he was ? ' That, and the way I saw him watching Pat before, and the shot as I clearly saw it, leaves me no shadow of a doubt. I 'd have seen none of it if I 'd been waiting to shoot myself. It was safe as houses, and it 's still safe, too, for that sort of evidence wouldn't count a straw in court."

"You 're absolutely dead certain ? "

"Bob, I 'd give my right hand not to be. You know I 've always thought a lot of old Horrocks, though he 's such a quiet bird. But I am."

"I can't believe it. A fellow may know where a fellow is, and yet have his butt slip up on his shoulder. Might increase the chance of it, even. Look'ee, you note where you 're *not* to shoot : the birds come over, you get muddled, let drive at the one spot you 've made a special note of, eh ? Thing I used to be afraid of doing myself. I remember it well."

"That 's not your butt slipping."

"True. Shows how many ways it can happen."

"Horrocks's butt didn't slip ; he said it did."

"You couldn't have seen as clearly as that."

"I 'm sure of it."

"Look here. Here 's the two plainest, straightforwardest chaps anybody ever knew ; lives an open book, eh ? Both forty, both well off, best of friends, Pat married to Rosie, squarest thing in the world ; Horrocks a steady old bachelor, no entanglement possible, no blackmail possible, no dirty secrets. What 's his motive ? "

"I don't know."

"There *can't* be one. Look here, Jack, you 've got a wrong line on this business. You 'd better forget it. If you were right you couldn't prove anything, only make it worse for Rosie, eh ? And, anyway, you 're wrong."

I gave it up. "All right," I said, "I 'll say nothing unless I can pick up some sort of evidence. Will you keep your eyes open, too ? "

"If it 'll give you any pleasure. Finding nothing may satisfy you there 's nothing in it. That would be a useful thing to do. Damn it, we 've lost one friend—we don't want to lose another through notions like this."

I said no more. We turned up the drive. Rosie must have seen us from a window ; she came out on the steps.

"You 're back early. Where are your guns ? Was that Clark who rushed by on the motor-bike ? There 's been an accident ? Not—— ? "

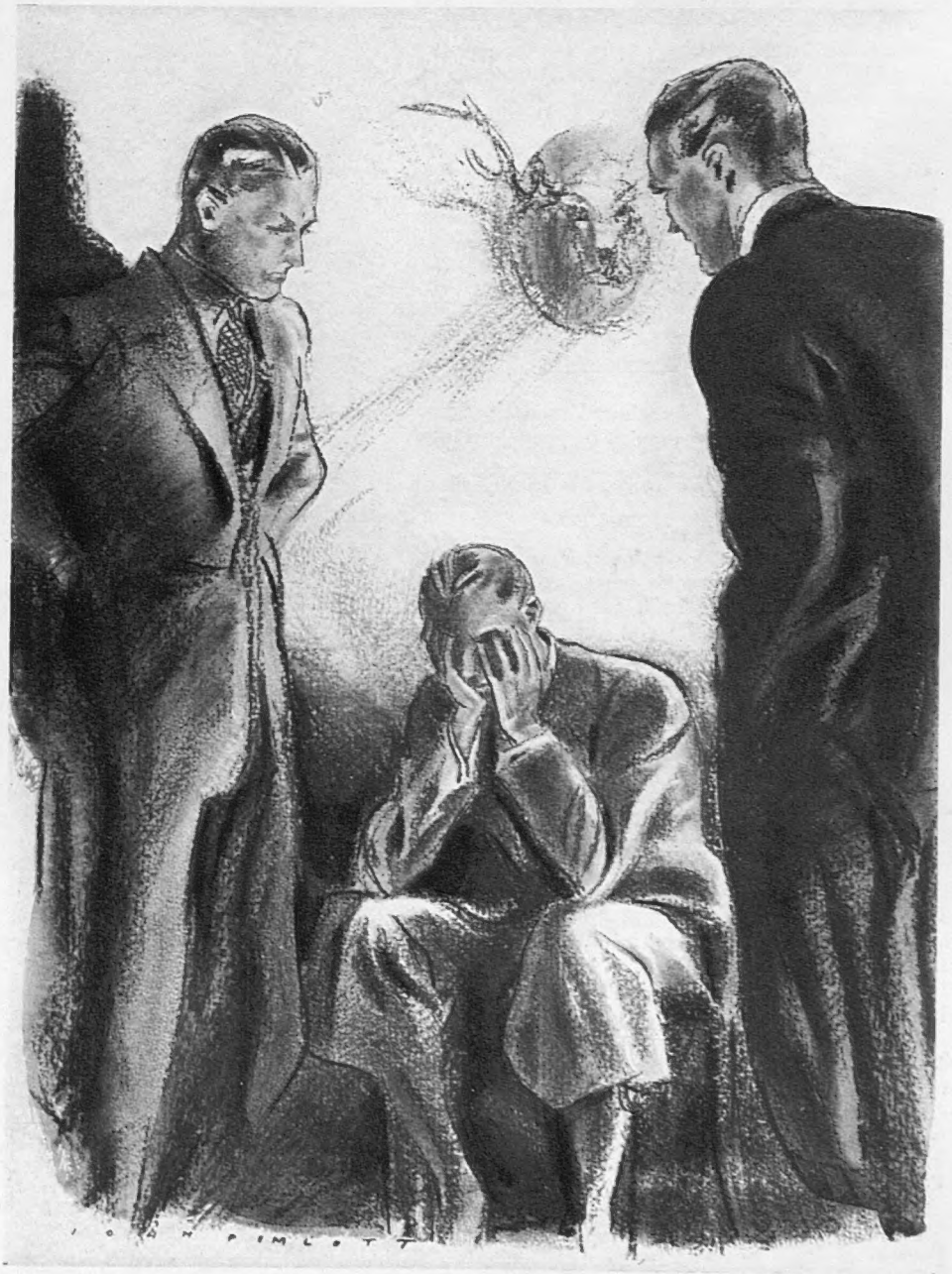
I told her without any beating about the bush. She was cut as deep, and took it as bravely, as I 'd known she would. One of the first things she said was : "Poor Jimmy Horrocks ! What must he be feeling ? Tell him . . . you know." I privately vowed to tell him something that would surprise him when the time came.

We took her upstairs, and left her alone. Bob went to telephone to her married daughter at the vicarage. I was crossing the hall when the keeper's motor-bike drew up at the steps. Nichols dismounted from it.

"I came on," he said, "to see if I could be of any use."

"You might go and find the chauffeur, and tell him to stand by with the car," I suggested. "They say he 's down at the bottom lodge."

"All right," said he. "I 'll just run upstairs first."



Horrocks was looking the picture of misery

I went outside and saw the rest of them had come up. Rosie's daughter came; she went up to her mother, and, returning, told me her father's body should be brought straight in. That done, the rest of us gathered in a little breakfast-room, tucked away at the back of the house, a place where we could wait without being in the way.

Horrocks was there, looking the picture of misery, as well he might. I watched him: his regret seemed a marvellous piece of acting; at one moment I almost doubted what my eyes had seen; at the next I was devoured by fury at the insolence of the whole thing, the safe, cocksure, cold-blooded murder done under our very noses. I saw the point, though, of young Stevens's objection: that it was worse than useless to say anything unless one had evidence that would count in a court of law.

"My God!" said Horrocks, "if it had been the first barrel I'd done it with, I think I'd have put the second through my own head."

"My dear chap, everyone's gun might slip up his shoulder," said Nichols, "once."

Their eyes met, then Horrocks shuddered. "That was a very strange shudder," I thought.

"I'll never shoot again," said Horrocks, in a painfully controlled voice.

"Nonsense! You mustn't take it that way. I hope to have the pleasure of shooting with you again," said Nichols.

I thought this was rather tactless. So did one or two of the other guns; we exchanged glances. I remember thinking that Nichols, who was a saturnine, bilious sort of fellow, was probably nervy underneath, and bound to put his foot in it, in the way people do when they are all on edge. He went on in this strain, sounding as if he were talking at Horrocks, for some minutes. Then the parson, Rosie's son-in-law, came in, told us something about arrangements, and that we'd have to be on hand for the inquest, hinted that we could find good accommodation at the village inn, and withdrew. The others went up to have things moved; Nichols sat still; Horrocks, who had risen to go, saw he made no move, and resumed his seat, staring at Nichols.

It struck me that Nichols was thoroughly enjoying himself.

"Didn't you know he was there?" he said to Horrocks.

"I didn't know exactly where," said Horrocks. Which was a lie, because I'd seen him nod when Pat lifted his hand.

"But he called out to you," said Nichols sharply.

"No," said Horrocks.

"My dear fellow, I distinctly heard you say 'O.K.' just half a minute before it happened." At this I was thunderstruck, for I knew no words had been exchanged. "Good Lord!" I thought, "Nichols suspects him, too. He's trying to catch him out by bluff." So I nodded when Nichols glanced at me. So far, so good; but what almost put me on Horrocks's side was a peculiar gloating air that Nichols displayed.

"It was a terrible wound," he said. Horrocks panted a little.

"I can't understand," went on Nichols, "how you could have done it with your partridge gun. You know," he said, turning to me, "how Horrocks has a notion of using double cylinders for partridges, and different guns, left full-choked, for pheasants?" I shrugged my shoulders.

"You couldn't have taken out one of the pheasant guns by mistake, Horrocks?" pursued Nichols. "No, of course you couldn't, not by mistake. You keep those in a double-decker, don't you? You always use seven-shot, too, don't you, for partridges? I'd have thought that wound was made by fives at least."

"Have you seen my cap anywhere?" he said next. "A green one, Horrocks? But now black's the only wear, I suppose."

Horrocks turned his broad back on him.

"I'm going down to the village," he said to me. "Coming?"

"I was going to stay about here a while," I said, "but I'll walk down with you. I can fix up my room then, anyhow."

Nichols sat still in his chair, and watched us go out. We went down the long corridor, all cupboards, up some steps into the main part of the house, and down again into the hall.

"Wait a minute; I want some money," said Horrocks, and ran up the main stairs again. He soon returned, and we set off to the village. I more than half expected some sort of revelation on the way.

"I didn't shout 'O.K.' to Pat," said Horrocks, very flatly. "Nor did he shout to me, that I'll swear."

"Will you swear you didn't see him?" I said.

"I could, if I wanted to split hairs," he replied. "However, the game's all up now, though you may not realise it. You having seen a lot, and Nichols prepared to swear anything. Rushed back to look at my gun-cases: a good guess. Ah, well!"

"You did it, then?"

"I did it intentionally, do you mean? I certainly shot to kill."

"But Pat?" I cried. "How——?"

"Nichols," he said heavily.

"What?"

"I thought Nichols was there. He must have changed with Pat after the line-up. They both had green caps on, and the

"There was a row! Nichols took his kicking, but . . ."

cap was about all I could see clearly. He waved his hand, but his face was turned half away from me."

"But——?"

"Look here, I'll tell you how it is. I thought I'd like a few words with you, just to tell you, before . . . the whole business . . . gets messed . . . newspapers. I've always thought you were all right, you know."

"I can't promise any sort of confidence, you understand?"

"I don't want you to as far as I'm concerned. Listen. This act began last night; the first was some years ago. I had a young sister, married a fellow called Miller; that was in 'twenty-eight. They spent their honeymoon at a place called Ceret, a tiny place in the Pyrenees, and the next year they went there again for a holiday."

"Ah! Nichols was talking about Ceret last night at dinner!"

"That's it. He mentioned the date, too. That's how I knew he was the Nichols I was after. Well, he was there that July, met them, and looked them up in town later on. Miller was on the Stock Exchange. Nichols, who was older and a good deal richer and a damned sight cleverer, was some sort of a financier. He began to pester my sister; got a severe snub: I imagine this inflamed his vanity, made him determined to succeed and revenge himself at the same time. You know there are people who get some satisfaction from the thought of *crushing*. Very well; he either persuaded young Miller into some sort of peccadillo—possibly one of those things everybody on the Exchange does, but which are ruin if they come to light—or else he invented it. Anyway, he persuaded my sister he could smash him up with a word.

"She was a good sort, a very good sort, poor girl, but a fool, and timid; no sense of proportion at all. She worried herself to death; in the end, she gave in. Then Nichols had a hold on her. I say she was a fool, but she wasn't silly enough to stand all she did stand just for fear of a simple, panic-stricken concession coming to light. It was too obviously forgivable, anyway. No, what Nichols did was to edge her, an inch at a time, into a really ugly sort of life, always using the last folly as a lever to edge her into the next. I don't know whether he'd have stopped or not; anyway, young Miller suddenly conceived the idea that Nichols was trying to seduce his wife. Ha, ha! This was just about when he was making her go to certain little places in Paris—you know—with him.

"There was a row. Nichols, of course, daren't say a word of the truth. He was a weak, flabby devil. Flesh like jelly. Ugh! He held his tongue, took his kicking, eh? But then he was out to smash both of them, absolutely. Put pressure on Miller in the money market; used Clarry as a spy on her own husband; dragged her deeper into the mud all the time. I don't think he was far off having Miller in quod, and Clarry, God only knows where.

"Well, she dodged him in the end. All right. Wrote me a letter, d'you see? Only it was a crazy sort of letter, mentioned the name Nichols, mentioned Ceret, and most of what I've been telling you. Only no way of tracing the fellow. I went to Ceret; there was no address in the hotel book. I'm not a detective. I didn't know what to do; couldn't drag the thing to light, you know.

"I saw young Miller pretty often. I said nothing. A little while ago he came to me. 'Look here,' he said. He'd had an anonymous letter; Clarry's photograph in it. Just a line, typewritten, 'Go to 19, rue de Ronceval, Montmartre, and ask if they know this lady.' This was the third he'd had; he was in the hell of a stew. He'd been—filthy place—and the people denied knowing her; he didn't know whether they were lying or not. I saw the stunt: to keep him on tenterhooks, send him clue after clue, warmer and warmer, till at last he found out. Clarry's memory, eh?

"I thought I'd stop that, anyhow. I went to some private detectives. Paid 'em a lot; they said they were working on a line, expensive, but every hope of success. That took up most of this summer. Nothing came of it; then I came down here. Nichols, a friend of Pat's, seemed all right. Thousands of Nichols, anyway. Then he mentioned Ceret. He caught my eye; I could see he didn't know whether I knew or not. Didn't know Clarry's maiden name, I expect. But he twigged something. That's why he changed places with Pat, eh? Then, of course, when it happened, he knew. Hoped to get me charged with murder, d'you think, or just to terrify me? You heard him."

"Good God!" I said.

"Anyway, that's a matter for me to deal with. Hold your tongue about Clarry, eh?" We had reached the main street of the village. He stopped outside the little police station.

"Well, I turn in here," he said, as if it were his club.

"Good-bye," and he put out his hand. I took it.

"Must you go?" I asked doubtfully, sounding like some damned hostess.

"Oh, yes."

"It'll be the devil of a triumph for Nichols."

"Ah! I'm afraid I have to talk to them about Nichols, too. You forget I went back for a minute, just as we were going out. It wasn't for money."

"What?"

"A lot can happen in a minute. The flabby beast! Good-bye."

THE END.

"PANDORA'S BOX" A Camera Study by John Everard

Presentation Plates

A Few Christmas Number Suggestions for some of our Famous Contemporaries

LAVENDER AND OLD BEDSOCKS

A Flâneur of the 'Nineties Looks at Our Modern World

By D. B. Wyndham Lewis

" You can go to bed, Rawson "

REGULARLY once a week, late at night, my man, Rawson, having set at my side the decanter, cigarettes, the biscuit-box, the *Spectator*, and *La Vie Parisienne*, coughs softly, hesitates, and says:

" Anything else, Sir ? "

" Nothing else," I reply. " You can go to bed, Rawson."

He still hesitates.

" You wouldn't like the little Chinese cabinet to-night, Sir ? "

" No."

" Thank you, Sir. Good-night, Sir." He turns away.

" Wait." He turns back.

" Yes, you can get it. No. Wait."

He waits, fidgeting, while I make up my mind.

" You want it, Sir ? "

" Yes."

" Then why the hell can't you ruddy well say so at first, you old nut ? " asks Rawson, and, grumbling loudly, he goes into the drawing-room and returns with a little red lacquer cabinet. An excellent servant, Rawson, but apt, I fancy, to take liberties. In my younger days I would have sacked the fellow. I would do so now, but he looks rather like an elder brother I once had. He himself claims that he *is* my elder brother. I do not know if this is true. I got him from an agency. Our family have been Colonial administrators for generations. Rawson derives some of his rather ostentatious aplomb from the fact that he is " Mr. Babble " of the *Daily Keyhole*, the only untitled gossip-writer in London, and quite absurdly proud of it. He misses very little, my women friends tell me ruefully.

WHEN he has gone, I fumble for a little curiously-wrought key and open the lacquer cabinet. A faint aromatic fragrance arises. I slide a finger under the neat top layer of letters in faded ink (some with coroneted envelopes) and poke absently among the relics underneath: old theatre and race programmes, old dinner and dance invitations, gloves, corks, bills for flowers and trinkets, locks of hair, writs—all the romantic débris of a crowded social existence. At the sight and scent of them, the dear dead days rise up again before me.

They were better days; more gracious, less neurotic. I remember the morgue with which my friend Cyril, Lord Rollingstone, received the advent into this world of his eldest daughter, Georgette (" Goofy "). Having cursorily glanced at the infant, he put up his glass a second time.

" Why," he said, " the child 's as black as my hat ! "

" Yes, my Lord," said the nurse, slightly embarrassed.

" Damn these African cruises ! " said Rollingstone, dropping his eyeglass languidly and lounging away to his club. He never mentioned the matter again, except to give directions, on " Goofy's " sixteenth birthday, that she had better learn the banjo; and, four years later, to suggest a firm of exterior decorators for her presentation at Court. To-day, what endless chatter and innuendo over so simple a happening ! What veiled allusions in the Press ! What sniggering !

Only the other day I received this note from a charming young débutante, just married—

DEAR UGLY,—

Will you blow in for a perfectly lousy cocktail on Wednesday, about seven, or will you oblige me by just going to hell ?

H.

Forty years ago, thirty years ago even, we would never have used a phrase as crude as " Blow in." Nor,

" Why," he said, " the child 's as black as my hat ! "

Sketches by
John Reynolds

I remember once . . . running down an elderly Duchess

incidentally, would this débutante's young husband, a Peer richer in pimples than principle, have stuck me for a defective second-hand motor-car and then attempted to blackmail me on my own notepaper. *We* did not do such things. In every country house one stays at, there is notepaper and to spare.

The modern woman has lost that grace of poise and gesture she had under Victoria and the Seventh Edward. I remember once, when bicycling was fashionable, running down an elderly Duchess by accident in Shropshire. I stammered profuse apologies. The Duchess said graciously:

"A pure inadvertence, no doubt."

I mumbled my regrets.

"A pure inadvertence. Have you," asked the Duchess, "been bicycling long?"

I said I had not.

"Mr. Balfour," she said, "is a very good bicyclist."

She buttoned her glove, and added: "Are you fond of pressing wild flowers?"

"I—well, I scarcely——"

"Nothing is more interesting," said the Duchess decisively, "than a well-arranged herbarium. It is a much more profitable hobby than bicycling, particularly," she added smilingly, "for a damned great clumsy cuckoo like you! Good-morning, and rat you!"

I cycled back to luncheon very thoughtfully. The house-party was representative of all that is best in English social life. No horse-play, no scandal, no vulgarity. As I pedalled up the avenue, a Cabinet Minister whizzed past me, naked, on a tricycle, wearing a wreath of roses over one eye, humming a comic song, and respectfully pursued by the butler with a dressing-gown. Everybody in Society knew and made allowances for this amiable foible. And now, what? A few months ago, when an eminent statesman, staying at a house in Lincolnshire, took off his trousers after dinner and danced the Dance of the Seven Veils on the West Lawn, everybody jeered, and somebody turned a hose on him. Manners! Are any left? Look at the present Peerage! What a mixture! Well did the dear old Marquess of Rye, a splendid representative of the ancien régime, say to me thirty-five years ago: "When der British Beerage shall have a drifle more gommon begome, there shall be no goot therein, so?"

It was, incidentally, Rye's son, young "Roneo" Camber, who refused to employ a facsimile signature at the foot of the letter sent out by his secretary to those of Lady Camber's selected co-respondents on the final short list. "Half an hour's work," said Camber, "hurts nobody, and, damn it, one owes it to one's friends, doesn't one?"

That consideration, that courtesy, that breeding seems to have vanished for ever. I listlessly turn over my collection of relics. Theatre programmes. Shows were better then. Variety was variety. At the Empire in November 1899, I observe, there was a leading actor and a world-famous chimpanzee in the same bill. The actor got a knighthood a year later. Press-cuttings. Notice of a new society memoir. Ah! Books were worth something then! Too many of 'em now. In my days, when we had a book we *had* a book. I had a good book in 1907. I have forgotten its title. It was about a horse, I think. . . .

I sip a glass of old brandy, consumed with melancholy. We old fellows should avoid raking up the past. Fatal thing to do! As I brood, the door opens and Rawson enters with a salver.

"Note for you, Sir. By hand."

I glance at it. A lunch invitation. Lady Pamela Golightly.

"All right, Rawson."

"You 'll go, I suppose, Sir?"

"Yes."

"You *would*. You might," says Rawson meditatively, "ask that glandered hag when she 's going to come across with the tenner she owes me over the Thruster divorce exclusive. Halves, it was. Took a bit of getting, and who did all the work?"

"I shall do nothing of the sort."

"You will, or get a sock on the nose. Anything else, Sir?" asks Rawson respectfully, at the door.

"Nothing else."

"The blue suit to-morrow, Sir?"

"The light grey."

"*I 'm* wearing that."

"All right—the blue."

"Very good, Sir. Good-night, Sir."

"Good-night."

. . . . . .

He is gone. Confound the fellow! He certainly takes liberties. These modern servants! This modern world!

Wearily, I lock the little lacquer cabinet, finish my brandy, and go up to bed.

THE END

A Cabinet Minister whizzed past me on a tricycle

One Steyne

By

Duke Bedding has hired a troupe of cabaret girls to entertain his guests

Evans, Earl Steyne's Welsh valet, a hideous, deformed creature

Lord Jo

THE story opens at Bedding Towers, the ancestral home of Duke Bedding. Bedding Towers is a fine old place that looks, from a distance, suspiciously like the model of a fine old place used in a number of other films by a number of other companies—that is to say, it has a bewildering array of pepperpot turrets, lights that blaze all night in every room, and wrinkles in the sky behind it. But it cannot be the model of a fine old place used in a number of other films by a number of other companies, for, if you will stroll down to the ancestral gates at the foot of the avenue (which, oddly enough for Sussex, consists of cypress trees), you will find a notice tacked on the gates which reads, "Bedding Towers" (and on the back, "Property of Homer Glutzbaum Productions, Inc.").

A dinner-party is in progress at the Towers. In the banqueting-hall, which should be, if anything, about nine feet longer than the Albert Hall, a thousand people are seated at long tables. Each guest has a powdered footman behind his chair, and all are shouting wittily at each other over their plates of stuffed peacock. The ladies present are mostly dazzling blondes of Scandinavian appearance, such as are to be found everywhere in English county society, and wear dresses that would look a trifle outré at a Congress of Cocottes; the men, obedient to the stern tradition of the British aristocracy, are clad in mess jackets. All present are plastered—the silly old English word for "tight."

The occasion is a notable one, for not only is there to be a boar-hunt to-morrow in Bedding Forest, but in two days time, Lady Millicent, Duke Bedding's only daughter, is to be married to Earl Steyne. (The earls have been called Steyne in about fifty other American pictures, but don't let that worry you—the Steynes get around a lot, and can not only dish it out, but take it!)

At this point in the story it would help to establish the genuinely British atmosphere of the picture if the director were to move the microphone up to the head of the table so as to record a snatch of Duke Bedding's conversation with Earl Steyne.

DUKE BEDDING: Bad show, what!

EARL STEYNE: Stout fellah!

DUKE BEDDING: Aw, nertz!

In the midst of this scene of unbridled debauchery sits Lady Millicent. She is talking to Attorney Blenkinsop, a fashionable London lawyer. Millicent's voice has a clipped and cautious accent that you might suppose came from being taught English in a hurry by a woman called Natasha Winkelbaum (corner of Vine Street and Hollywood Boulevard), if you were not, of course, aware that it is the typical voice of the British aristocracy.

Millicent is not paying much attention to Attorney Blenkinsop's conversation. She is sitting half-aloof—but, as the attorney no doubt reflects, half-aloof is better than no bride. In short, Lady Millicent's mind is not on the job. Nothing amuses her to-night, not even the thought of to-morrow's boar-hunt—which ought to bring a smile to those well-chiselled lips (her maid, Marie, chiselled them again just before dinner), seeing that no wild boars have been reported in Great Britain since 1727.

MILLICENT is thinking of her forthcoming marriage to Earl Steyne. She does not love him, but it is a tradition that a Steyne should marry a Bedding, and being her father's daughter (a fact never yet disproved, in spite of Duchess Bedding's one-time reputation for whoopee—old-English word for "harmless fun"), she bows to tradition.

Our heroine is still bowing to tradition when dinner ends. Duke Bedding presents each of the male guests with a cellophane-wrapped cigar from a platinum humidor shaped like the Taj Mahal, and the whole party goes reeling into the drawing-room, which is, if anything, about an acre larger than Olympia, not excluding the Empire Hall. Once they have reached the drawing-room, we can leave the whole party happily ensconced there, for Duke Bedding has hired a troupe of cabaret girls from London to entertain his guests.

It should be hardly necessary to say that Lady Millicent does not reel into the drawing-room. Instead, she glides into the hall and, gazing up at a copy of Romney's Lady Hamilton, murmurs brokenly: "I guess they made it tough for yew, tew, Granny!"

This gazing and murmuring does not pass unobserved, for behind a suit of armour is standing Evans, Earl Steyne's Welsh valet, a hideous, deformed creature with a black fringe, a wall-eye, green teeth, a twisted lip, and anything else that Boris Karloff can think up in time.

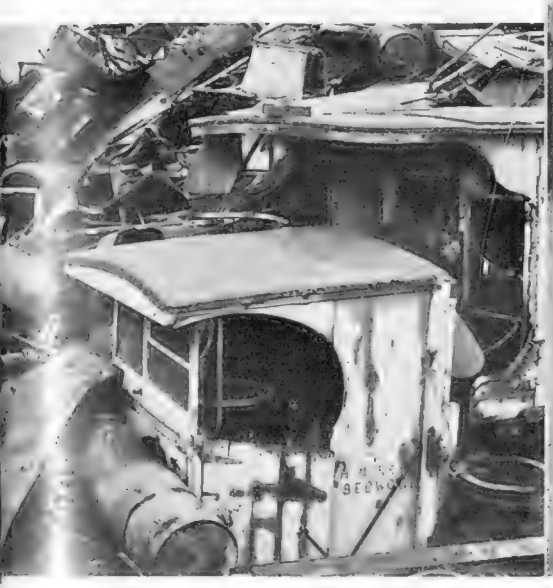
"It be main queer!" mutters Evans, half to himself and half to the fiftieth row of the Imperial fauteuils. This mutter may refer to the fact that Lady Hamilton, whatever else she may have been (and God knows we 're all of us human!), was not a Bedding, but more likely means that he thinks it main queer that Lady Millicent should be gazing and murmuring about the place when she ought to be sitting happily beside Earl Steyne, watching the cabaret—which, a quick "shot" through the ancestral double-doors shows us, has just reached the bathing-a-girl-in-champagne stage.

It is raining outside—which is no more than was to be expected, considering the

During the past year we have seen many American films with "British" settings. Almost all of them have contained glaring inaccuracies—and it is beginning to look as though, despite the fact that they spend the larger part of the year in the Savoy Hotel bar, the highly-salaried executives of Hollywood will never learn to portray Britain correctly. This being so, it would be a pleasant, Christmassy gesture if, rather than put the Americans to the trouble of studying British life more closely, we of the Old Country were to alter our ways so as to fit in more closely with Hollywood's idea of ourselves. With this in mind, I have written the synopsis of a film-story which, I am sure, will appeal to the Hollywood producers—and all I am asking my fellow-countrymen to do, this happy Christmastide, is to change their manners and customs completely so as to make this story truly British. If they will only do this, Hollywood will be accurate, for a change, and I shall be richer by about 100,000 dollars. Thank you!

less Night

Eric Maschwitz



rks his car at a corner of the avenue

Lord Johnson takes her in his arms

wrinkled state of the sky earlier in the evening. Through the night is hurtling a high-powered American car, with a Los Angeles number-plate—the sure sign of a British aristocrat out for a hurtle in the leafy lanes of Sussex. The car turns into the avenue of cypress-trees that leads to Bedding Towers. In it is Lord Johnson, the scion of a noble house, and, as far as Lady Millicent is concerned, a scion from Heaven, for he is the Man she Loves.

Lord Johnson parks his car at a corner of the avenue, and hurtles through the rain towards a summer-house, where Lady Millicent is waiting for him. She has no coat with her but, luckily, her clothes are as dry as when we last saw her.

"Honey!" says Lord Johnson. "What happened, huh? I been calling yew all day from town, but I never could get yew!" At first, knowing that Bedding Towers must be at least forty miles out of London, we are inclined to consider Lord Johnson's complaint unreasonable—until we remember that, when they talk of "calling," these English aristocrats mean "telephoning."

Lady Millicent quickly explains that her engagement to Earl Steyne has been announced, and it was therefore impossible for her to answer the telephone in case someone might suspect. "I'm not certain of that man Evans," she says—which seems to indicate that centuries of inbreeding have vitiated her powers of perception, for anyone who, after one look at that black fringe, that wall eye, that twisted lip, is not *quite* certain of Evans must be a sap!

"I'll hide yew here to-night," whispers Lady Millicent, "and to-morrow, during the boar hunt, we will fly away some place else, and be just yew and I!" after which Lord Johnson takes her in his arms and they settle down to a spell of steady "necking"—English for "love-making."

Several hours later, Lady Millicent creeps back to the Towers. Her return does not pass unnoticed. Evans, still behind the suit of armour (which is just the sort of thing he ought to keep behind permanently), sees her running up the seven hundred steps that lead up from the hall to the first floor. Evans guesses

(Continued on page 70)

Several hours later, Lady Millicent creeps back to the Towers

They jump into coaches, eager to be off to the meet

The hounds chase Lord Johnson out of the summer-house

Trying unobtrusively to cut his throat with a fish-knife

SMART-BREAK HOUSE:

A Week-end Comedy of Errors

THE whole thing was the fault of my second footman. Of course, my butler should have noticed the mistake, or, at any rate, one of the valets ought to have called the butler's attention to it. But, as it was, nobody saw the grotesque blunder, and my Christmas week-end was completely ruined by it. This is what happened. I was going, as usual, to spend Christmas with the dear Duchess, and my second footman accompanied me to the station—the roads were icy and I did not like to risk the Bentley—in order to place my suit-cases in the rack. By some gross incompetence, he left my set of suit-cases on the platform for a moment, and when he returned, he picked up another set altogether, similar in shape and design, and put them in my carriage and departed.

During the course of the journey I glanced at one of the labels to remind myself which dear Duchess I was about to visit—there are so many, the darlings, and my memory is so uncertain—and duly noted that I was on my way to Chesilden Abbey to stay with the Duchess of Chesilden. The name did not sound familiar, but you know what it is. More people know Tom Fool, etcetera.

The train stopped at Chesilden private station. I was met by a Rolls, of course, and duly arrived at the Abbey, and all the trouble began.

I got my first shock when the butler, bowing with extreme deference, handed me a sheaf of typewritten notes, with the strange words, "Your fellow-guests, Sir; it may be useful." And with that he showed me to my room.

I was even more puzzled when I found that the notes contained short biographies of a number of ladies and gentlemen who were apparently staying in the house. There was Lavinia Rustington, for instance, the film-star. There was the young Marquis of Ritz, the famous stock-broker; and Jebusa Jilk, the American golfer Each had a typewritten description. The Hon. Veronica Tight had a photograph attached to hers, showing her leaving the register-office with her third husband in three years, young Osbert Tight, the novelist. A third member of Running Footman Club, Miss Marilyn Mogg, was also in the house; Miss Mogg had earned a well-deserved reputation as an explorer by her famous expedition across the Sahara on a motor-scooter, which she did by proxy (Miss Mogg put up the money and Al Orsini, champion motor-scooterist of the two Dakotas, did the rest) in 1931. There was also Miss Myrtle D'Este, a fashion-writer, of a fine old banking family, and lastly, there was the famous Irish beauty, Mrs. O'Halloran. Mrs. O'Halloran would undoubtedly have been a serious rival to Mrs. Langtry in the 'nineties, but unfortunately, in the 'nineties Mrs. O'Halloran, then a lovely girl of twenty, was living quietly in her native city of Portland, Oregon.

. . . . . .

The first person I met in the large hall downstairs was obviously Mr. Jebusa Jilk, the golfer. He addressed me at once.

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Cicerone," he said. "Sit right here and talk to me. I am over here

The Duchess was working out a sum with a fountain-pen on the table-cloth and there was hardly a guest who was not jotting a was scribbling feverishly on the shirt-front of one of the footmen

The "Right" People—and the Wrong Destination

The first person I met in the large hall downstairs was obviously Mr. Jebusa Jilk, the golfer

By A. G. MACDONELL: *Nicolas Bentley drew the pictures*

for three weeks, having just won the State Championship of Kentucky in 287 strokes, or thirteen under par. In my first round——"

"Excuse me," I interrupted courteously, "but my name is Macdonell, not Cicerone."

"In my first round," replied Mr. Jilk, "I had two birdies, four eagles, and only three-putted once."

"Excuse me," I said, "but my name——"

"By all means," said Mr. Jilk. "In my second round——"

I listened until we were going up the fairway of the eleventh hole in the third round, and then I cautiously stole away. Mr. Jilk did not notice that I had gone, and as I crept through a door, I heard him hesitating whether to tackle an awkward lie on the sixteenth fairway with a No. 2 or a No. 3 iron.

In the next room an elderly lady was having a nap in an arm-chair. She awoke at my entrance, gave me one look, and sprang up. "Oh, Mr. Cicerone," she cried gaily, "I am so glad to see you."

"My name," I observed, "is Macdonell."

"What does that matter?" she replied archly. "We younger ones all know you as Cicerone."

My brain, never very strong, began to reel.

"You see, I'm only thirty-nine," she went on. "How old are you?"

"Thirty-eight," I muttered. The elderly party dug me in the waistcoat with a finger and said: "No flirting, now. At thirty-nine one is too old for flirting. But, dear Mr. Cicerone, will you promise me one thing? Don't tell your public that I am thirty-nine."

"My public?" I murmured in a daze.

note down somewhere. The butler

"Well, whatever you call it. Now, don't forget. Thirty-nine. That's what you mustn't tell them," and the old lady tripped out, and I fled into the billiards-room, where I found three rather sulky-looking young people sitting silently in a corner. I had no difficulty in recognising Mr. and Mrs. Tight and Miss Marilyn Mogg, who are so often photographed and so often described as London's Witties. They did not notice my entrance, and I sat down unobtrusively and waited for some sparkling talk.

For ten minutes no one spoke, and then suddenly Miss Mogg saw me. An extraordinary change came over her. She sat up, she snapped her elegant fingers as if trying to remember something, and she knitted her eyebrows. Then she relaxed and observed snappily: "Nothing succeeds like excess."

Instantly, Mr. and Mrs. Tight were galvanised into activity, and they, too, sat up and saw me. There was some confused coughing, and then Mrs. Tight said dreamily, "One must cure the senses by means of the soul."

"And the soul by means of the senses," added her brilliant husband hastily.

"An English squire hunting a fox—" began Miss Mogg, casting a dazzling glance in my direction—

"—is the unspeakable in pursuit of the uneatable," interrupted Mrs. Tight deftly, and Miss Mogg's dazzle turned into a scowl.

"Personally," said the lovely Veronica Tight, languorously, catching my eye in a mirror as she spoke, "I can resist anything except temptation."

There was a pause while they were obviously thinking hard.

At last Mr. Tight shook his head gloomily. "I hope I shall not die beyond my means," he observed. Then he got up and came across to me. "Wouldn't you like a pencil and paper," he asked, "just to jot some of these down?"

I was astonished at the offer. "But why should I jot them down?" I protested. "I have a complete set of Oscar Wilde at home."

"I thought you might make a couple of pars of it," he replied mysteriously, and went away. Not being able to face a recrudescence of so much brilliance, I crept out. By this time I was in acute anguish. My fellow-guests were all obviously insane. I went off in search of my hostess, the dear Duchess, and found her in the library, sticking newspaper-cuttings into an album. She greeted me with the greatest cordiality as Mr. Spragge, and laughed heartily when I tried to explain that my name was not Spragge.

(Continued on page ii)

BY TONY WYSARD

"Er—have you any Turkeys?"

THE DISAPPOINTING DAUGHTER

By Glenda Graham

Illustrated by Molly Bishop

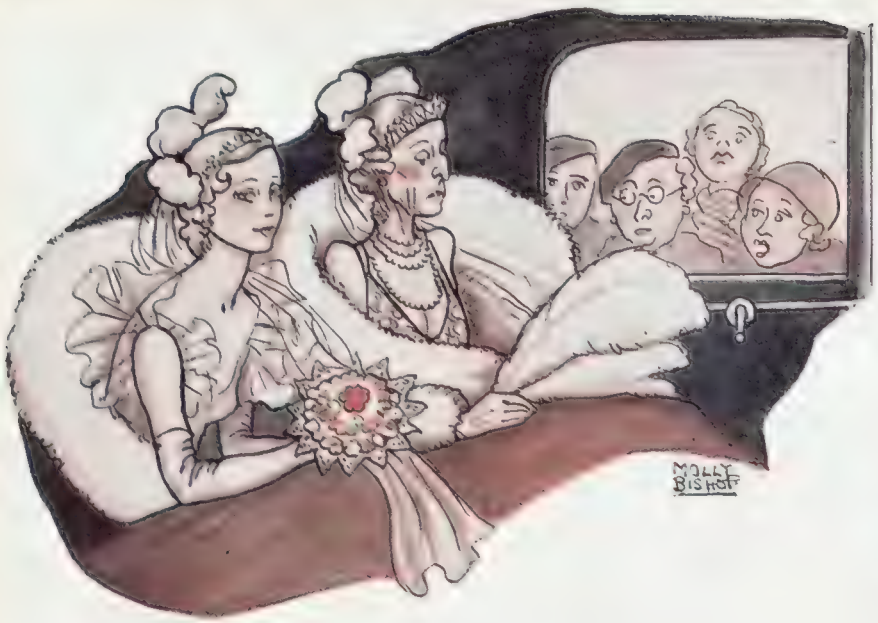
TO Lord and Lady Delahaye
Was gifted one bright summer day
A daughter, who, when "doing well,"
Was duly christened Isobel.

Already in the nursery sat
Their son, a puny little brat,
Who was, as first-born and the heir,
Put down for Eton College, where
He was to learn what he must do
To sit amongst the Chosen Few.

. . . In short, an English gentleman . . .

. . . sworn
To try and lead a better life,
To look at no one but his wife . . .

Just as his father—by repute
As self-assured as King Canute—
Had, when his effigy was born,
Beside the baby's cradle sworn
To try and lead a better life,
To look at no one but his wife,
So now, as Lady Ann revived,
She speculated and contrived
To bring her daughter up to plan
Till married to a nice young man,
Thus winning for herself the snood
That crowns successful motherhood.



. . . When at Court she first appeared . . .

Yet Bella, who at twenty-one
Was doing things that are not done,
At twenty-two was one of those
Who, usually comatose
Till four or five p.m., emerges,
As full of pep as Boanerges,
To spend the night in drinking gin
At places like the "Slippery Inn";
Returning home as daylight breaks
With some of nature's worst mistakes
In most peculiar night attire,
Described by modern youth as "dire."

And Isobel at seventeen
Had just that sweet, vivacious mien
That's reckoned on to captivate,
As willing and protective mate,
A Real Man—you know the sort,
My dear, who simply lives for sport;
Whose only cares are (1) the 'chase
And (2) his regiment or his "place,"
And (3) the book in which is billed
The birds and fishes he has killed;
Who has no need to think or plan;
In short, an English gentleman.

How was the world at large to know
That hatching even now, below
The feathers and the heirloom lace
Surmounting Bella's lovely face,
Were tendencies to err and stray
Not usual in a Delahaye?

. . . To spend the night in drinking gin At places like the "Slippery Inn" . . .

Her loving parents had no doubt
But that, when Isobel came out,
She'd be the most complete success
From Mayfair up to Inverness.
So when at Court she first appeared
Ann made her husband trim his beard,
While she herself, in rich brocade
And family diamonds, surely made
The most imposing Cicerone
That ever stood before a throne.

. . . Till—following the Chelsea Ball—
The girl did not come home at all . . .

Instead of joining Church Parade,
Where brilliant matches still are made,
Miss Delahaye preferred to float
All morning in a hired boat
In Regent's Park or Battersea,
Where gentlefolk should never be;
Instead of Ascot, where she 'd meet
The Eligible and Élite,
She went with men in flannel slacks
To dirt or greyhound racing tracks;
Instead of spending nice week-ends
In parties with her County friends,
She patronised obscure hotels
At Brighton or at Tunbridge Wells;
Instead of taking some young man
To dances, chaperoned by Ann,
She spent the evenings in Soho,
Where *really* nice girls never go.

Night after night in Eaton Square,
Where vulgar happenings are rare,
The gratings of a sports car's gears
Jarred on her anxious parents' ears;
Night after night they listened for
The taxi's ticking at the door,
While Isobel made hopeless plights
With curious-looking satellites;
Till—following the Chelsea Ball—
The girl did not come home at all.

All night her father waited for
Her key to rattle in the door;
So that the servants should not know,
He made a truly gallant show—
In vain. At dawn he took his will
And sadly made a codicil. . . . . .

Their chauffeur's aunt first brought
the news
That Isobel was in their mews,
Inhabiting a garage flat
As "partner" to—an acrobat.
Then, only then, the wretched Lord
Took Lady Ann, and went abroad.

G. G.

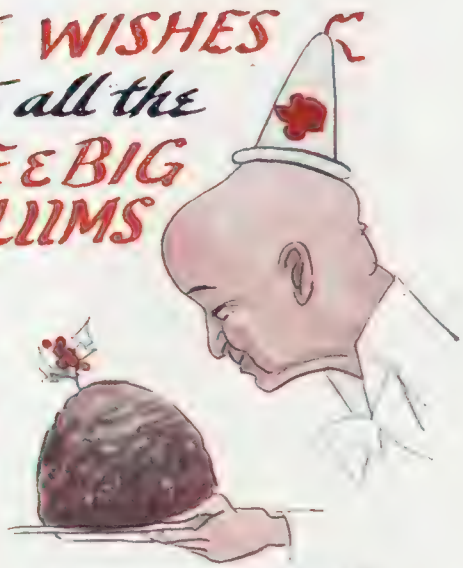
. . . Inhabiting a garage flat
As "partner" to—an acrobat. . . .

Greetings to the Great: A Seasonable Selection

TO MONTAGU NORMAN

TO REX HARTLEY

TO SIR HENRY WOOD



TO PLUM WARNER

TO BRIG GEN A.C. CRITCHLEY

TO SIR HARRY PRESTON

of "Bystander" Christmas Cards Designed by H. H. Harris

TO GERTRUDE LAWRENCE

TO HANNEN SWAFFER & DEAN INGE

TO SIR OSWALD MOSLEY

TO JACOB EPSTEIN

TO JIM THOMAS

TO TEDDY BROWN

Midnight Express

A Train, a Little Boat, Champagne,
a Bunch of Violets—
and the Adventure Ended at Dawn

By Ethel Mannin

Decorations by Margaret Bradley

THIS happened on a June night. There is "something about" June, just as there is "something about" midnight. At midnight everything tends to become either a little larger than life-size, or a little less; with the result that one will do at midnight, without thinking about it, what one would not even think about at any other time. If you have any romance in you, any imagination, that is. And if you haven't—heaven help you, for it's a dull life you'll be leading...

Now some swear by the Blue Train for romance, and some by the Orient Express, and some, even, by the Flying Scotsman; but I have always had an idea that the Cornish Midnight Express might well be the most romantic of the lot, for, as I say, there is something about midnight which excites the imagination. Nevertheless, when I went to Paddington that June night, to see some good friends off by the midnight express for their Cornish home, I had no intention of going aboard. For what should I be doing in Cornwall? I had not even intended remaining to see the train leave the station, for my friends had said: "Don't wait to see us off—those last few minutes, waiting for the train to go, are impossible," a sentiment with which I am in entire agreement. There were, in any case, only a few minutes before the train was due to leave, and my friends went straight to their "sleepers." I strolled away, with a vague, wistful regret in me that it was not for me to go hurtling through the night to far-off and lovely places. And then I saw The Girl With the Parma Violets.

She stood forlornly beside a pile of luggage, clutching her violets, and looking about her with an agitated expression. And she was very lovely. A pale face, fair hair, and a small, vivid, determined mouth. Nothing "fluffy" about her, in spite of her essential femininity. Something almost a little

"hard"—but the right kind of "hardness," the hardness of character and self-reliance, and an untouchable inner privacy.

As I approached she turned to me. "*Could* you find me a porter? The train goes in two minutes—and I can't manage this lot"—indicating the baggage at her feet—"myself."

I glanced about, but there was no porter in sight. I swooped down, and grabbed a suit-case in one hand and a valise in the other.

"If you can manage that small thing and the rackets," I said.

"Yes." There was no time for thanks. We rushed across the platform and clambered into the train and blundered along the corridor looking for a place for her. We found an empty one at last, and I hoisted the two big pieces of baggage up into the rack, whilst she dealt with the rackets and the small suit-case.

"Thank you," she said breathlessly. "It's terribly good of you—now you must fly."

I muttered something about it being no trouble at all and dashed out into the corridor. My feet kicked against something. It was the big bunch of Parma violets. I picked them up. A whistle was shrieking. I had a second in which to complete my exit from the train. The second passed as I hesitated with the bunch of violets in my hand. The train was moving slowly. I knew that in that second I could even then have escaped from it. But instead, without any conscious thought of what I was doing, I turned and took the violets back to their owner.

She snatched them from me. "Oh," she said, "why did you bother? The train's moving now. Whatever will you do?"

I sank down in the corner opposite her and smiled. "I really don't know. Does it matter? I expect if I'd really wanted to leave the train I would have ignored the violets. It must have been what the psycho-analysts call an unconscious wish that made me stop and pick them up. I expect I wanted to get left."

She stared at me, and I thought I saw a smile in her eyes. "But what on earth are you going to do now?"

(Continued on page 27)

DRAWN BY DOUGLAS

"Are you aware whom you are addressing, Sir?"

Midnight Express *(continued from page 25)*

"I really don't know," I told her. "Go to Cornwall, I suppose."

"Only to get the next train back? Isn't that a tame end to an adventure?"

"Sufficient unto the moment," I suggested.

"You're quite mad," she said, and smiled.

"It's the only way to enjoy life in a depressingly sane world," I assured her. We smoked and talked for a little while. She told me her name was Haynes—Joyce Haynes, and that she had a coastguard's cottage at a place I had never heard of; she was due to arrive about four in the morning; the station was by the harbour, and she would take herself in a small boat down the coast to her village—there was no other way of getting there at that time of the morning, she said; but she preferred travelling by the night train—she hated being cooped up in a train during the day, especially in the summer. She painted a little, she said. I knew it was an invitation to tell her about myself—but there was nothing to tell her, except that my name was Donald Faber, of Faber and Richards, solicitors, of Lincoln's Inn.

"You don't look like a solicitor," she said, eyeing my rather bright blue shirt suspiciously.

I told her that some solicitors have imagination, and left it at that. She leaned back in her corner, and was silent for a little while, and I thought the smile persisted in her eyes.

The inspector came to examine the tickets.

"I haven't one," I told him, producing my wallet.

"Where are you going?" he demanded.

I looked inquiringly at the girl. "Where *am* I going?" I asked helplessly.

She laughed. "You'd better book to my place," she suggested. "I'll run you down to the cottage in my boat and give you breakfast, if you like."

So I bought a ticket for the place I'd never heard of, and we talked of this and that, and watched each other, trying to get the measure of each other, and I told her, "You're just as mad as I am, you know, inviting a complete stranger to breakfast!" At which she laughed, and remarked, ambiguously, that, after all, there were strangers and strangers . . . and the midnight express hurtled on through the darkness with its cargo of people who slept and stayed awake . . . and presently, somehow, I was standing on a small station, with a slender, fair-haired girl beside me, and there was a smell of the sea, and of crushed violets, and a blaze of stars.

A sleepy old porter took our tickets, and the girl and I carried her baggage down to the jetty between us. I saw the shadowy shape of a small boat with a furled sail rocking at a mooring below a granite wall, and there was the soft lap of water.

Then the boat was plunging under us, and the girl was crouching over an engine. It started up with a thin, tinkly sound, and we shot away across the harbour. She looked very lovely, sitting there in the starlight with her hair flying, but now I felt her withdrawn from me, as though she had recoiled into that secret self I had glimpsed when I had first seen her standing on the platform at Paddington. I found it difficult to realise that that was only four hours ago. I had the odd feeling that I had known her for a long time. But for me she would have been sitting there in the boat by herself, scudding through the darkness with a white wake of waves behind her, and the shadowy hulk of an outlying Point ahead; and there was a sort of solitariness about her which did not make it at all strange to think of her like that, alone in a small boat, between dark sea and sky. I wanted to ask her if she lived alone in her coastguard's cottage, but it seemed an impertinence, and I could not think of her except as alone. She was silent in the boat, and I felt that to break in on that silence would be an intrusion on my part.

After about half an hour we came into a small harbour, and I made out a huddle of houses behind, and above the sea-wall the whiteness of the coastguards' cottages. She shut off the engine, and we drew in under the jetty; then she tied the boat up to an iron ring.

"I feel I ought to offer to help," I said, rather helplessly.

She laughed. "There's no need. It's enough if you'll lug the baggage up to the house."

"What would you have done if I hadn't been here?" I asked, as we walked along the pier.

"Left it on the steps," she said. "It would have been all right. One of the fishermen would have brought it up for me as soon as it was light."

The coastguards' station looked ghostly in the starlight. There were no lights in the windows. When she opened the door of her cottage we came straight into a room. She produced matches from her bag and lit an oil-lamp. When the light steadied I was aware of a small room with bookshelves, whitewashed walls, a stone floor. A bowl of roses gleamed on a bare table, and there was a faint, musty smell of pot-pourri and old wood and brine.

She tossed her soft hat and a light overcoat down on to a chair and smiled at me.

"I think we deserve a drink, don't you?"

I agreed, and she moved over to a cupboard and knelt down before it and regarded the contents a moment; then she laughed. "It's too absurd, you know; we appear to be out of everything except a bottle of champagne left over from Christmas! Could you face that—at this time of the morning? It mightn't be bad with the sandwiches I propose to make!"

I told her: "I've always cherished a secret ambition to drink the dawn in with champagne!"

We found a half-cooked ham in the tiny larder, and I helped her cut sandwiches. Then we covered a small table with a blue-and-white check cloth and set it in the window, beside a shelf on which stood geraniums and fuchsias. The stars were paling and a thin line of light was dividing dark sea and sky on the horizon. There were the first fitful twitterings of birds, as though they stirred in their sleep.

The girl came and stood beside me at the window.

"It's absurd your being here, isn't it?" she said, smiling.

"But very lovely—for me, anyhow," I told her. "The loveliest dawn I ever knew."

The adventure and absurdity of it all held me like some lovely, incredible dream. The midnight express hurtling through the night; the little boat hurtling over the dark sea, with the white wake of waves behind, and the stars racing; this little house with the sea almost under its windows, and the two of us awake in a sleeping world . . . how could I realise that only a few hours before I had been at Paddington with no thought of romance or adventure? If anyone had told me that dawn would find me drinking champagne in a coastguard's cottage somewhere in the West Country . . . yet there we were, the two of us, munching sandwiches and drinking champagne, whilst the stars faded and the light crept up over the sea; and the fact that only a few hours before we had been unaware of each other's existence, seemed

(Continued on page 74)

By Hicks

The Discourtesy of the Road!

"That's just how I feel about you, Mildred"

"'As it ever struck you Len, 'ow out of touch we've got with that side of life?"

What—again!"

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LAUGH . . .

Sketches by

FRANK FORD
ROBERTS JOHNSON
L. GAMBLIN
ROUSON
WAIN
BLAND and GOETZ

"Nonshense—You come home with me"

"How am I to be sure that you're a Fireman?"

"Copley! You're cheating!"

"Why Oskar, this is most unusual for November"

Wedding Manners

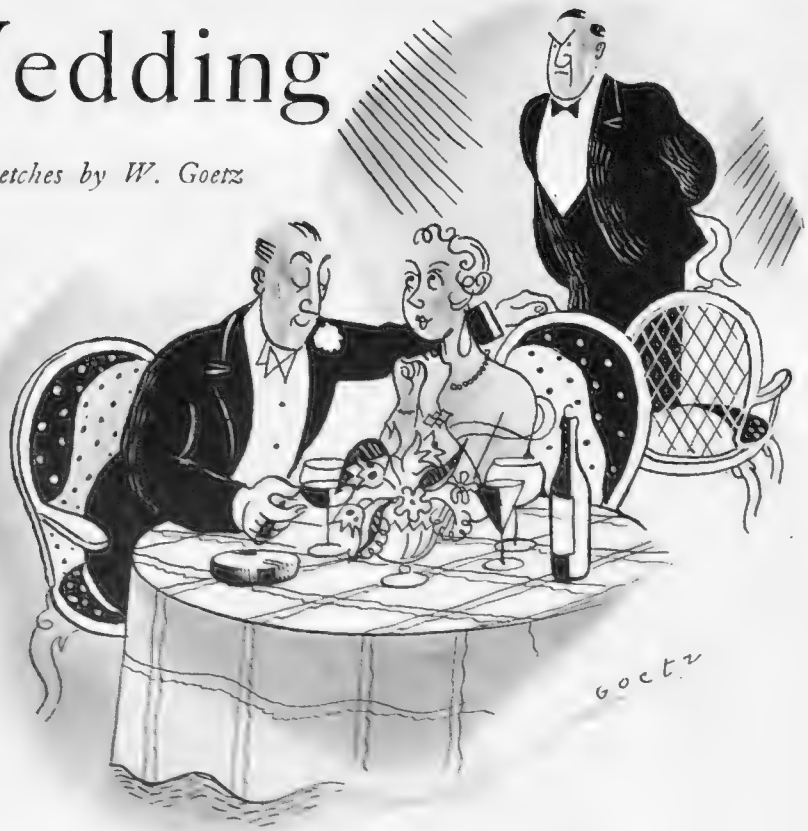
Sketches by W. Goetz

A Modern Conversation Piece

Talks *on the* Telephone—
Chatter *in the* Church—
Remarks *at the* Reception

Recorded by

Nancy Mitford



"Oh, clearly. People never dine in grills except when they're in love—it's a well-known fact. So then what happened? How's it going?"

ON THE TELEPHONE

OLIVIA: Good-morning, darling.

MOLLY: Good-morning, darling. (*Yawns terrifically.*)

OLIVIA: What's the dirt this morning?

MOLLY: Oh, yah! (*Yawns loudly into the telephone.*)

OLIVIA: What's that?

MOLLY: Nothing. Only a yawn. Gracious, how ill I do feel!

OLIVIA: That's just your good luck, dear. I wasn't asked out at all last night, and the result was I woke at eight feeling too depressingly healthy for words. I've been ringing to see if you were called every half-hour since. I just couldn't wait to hear all about it. Come on, now, every word. Where did you go?

MOLLY: I can't remember. Wait a minute while I pull myself together. Oh, yes, I know; we dined at the Berkeley Grill.

OLIVIA: That settles it, of course. He must be in love.

MOLLY (*brightening up*): Do you think so, darling?

OLIVIA: Oh, clearly. People never dine in grills except when they're in love—it's a well-known fact. So then what happened? How's it going?

MOLLY: Well, I'll tell you all about it some time.

OLIVIA: Come on; I'm eaten with curiosity!

MOLLY: No, really, darling, I can't. Not over the telephone.

OLIVIA: Why ever not?

MOLLY: Supposing somebody heard?

OLIVIA: What an idea! Who's likely to?

MOLLY: Kathleen is quite likely to, for one. She's buddies with a telephone-girl now and spends her whole time listening-in to juicy conversations which the girl puts her through to.

OLIVIA: What really *awful* news! We must be careful what we say. Tell me in eggi.

MOLLY: Kathleen knows eggi.

OLIVIA: Tell me in umble, then.

MOLLY: She knows umble, too. In fact, I believe she invented it.

OLIVIA: But, darling, I'm in tortures! Come round and see me before lunch, won't you?

MOLLY: Can't. I'm trying on a dress then.

OLIVIA: When *can* we meet? I'm free all day, worse luck.

MOLLY: Wait while I get out my little book. Honestly, there doesn't seem to be a moment. This afternoon I'm going to a lousy wedding——

OLIVIA: Whose wedding?

MOLLY: A girl called Gladys Popkin.

OLIVIA: I know. I've just been reading all about it in Betty Belgravia's Gossip. Listen to this. (*Crackles a newspaper.*) "To-day's bride defies superstition." Why do brides always defy superstition? I've never heard of one that didn't, have you? "Miss Gladys Popkin's Thirteen Attendants. Touches of Green on Wedding Gown. Miss Gladys Popkin looked the perfect picture of a radiant bride-to-be yesterday as she assisted her mother, Lady Norah Popkin, to arrange her wedding presents in the Belgrave Square house which they have taken for to-day's reception. A few intimate friends came in to view selections from her trousseau, which were proudly displayed by the heroine of the hour. 'Mummy wanted me to be an all-white bride,' she confessed, laughingly. 'But I think that's so dull, don't you?—so I am defying custom by having green ivy leaves embroidered at the waist of my dress. Also, I am wearing nothing old and nothing new—I have worn my wedding dress once on purpose—nothing borrowed, nothing blue'——" I say, darling, I've got an awfully good idea! Why shouldn't I gate-crash the wedding with you, then we could have a lovely, long gossip in the church?

MOLLY: Oh, do come, darling! That's grand. I always think there's nowhere like a wedding for a really good talk. I'll pick you up on my way, shall I? at about a quarter to two. We must be in plenty of time if we want to get in among the relations.

OLIVIA: Are you a relation?

MOLLY: No, of course I'm not. That's why we must be there nice and early. Bobby Bobbin is ushing and he has promised me the third pew, whatever happens. Well, good-bye, darling. See you there.

OLIVIA: Good-bye, darling. See you there.

IN THE CHURCH

USHER: Bride or bridegroom?

MOLLY: Well, actually, bride. But do you mind if we wait for Bobby Bobbin to show us our places? He's promised to give us a really good seat, you see.

USHER (*rather offended*): But I will give you a good seat, and, anyway, Bobby hasn't turned up yet.

MOLLY: Oh, all right, come on. Only please can it be in among the relations?

(*They walk up the aisle*)

OLIVIA: This is all very well, you know, but I'm right behind a pillar here. You don't seem to realise what a very, very dear and intimate friend I am of both parties.

"Here they come. They've been lovely and quick, haven't they? I think she's worse without her veil, don't you? And why do they look so disgustingly pleased with themselves, I wonder?"

USHER (*embarrassed*) : I 'm so sorry, but you can see for yourself that the next pew is reserved for relations only.

MOLLY : Oh, please do let us sit there. I don't suppose half the relations will turn up, do you ?

OLIVIA : Thank you *so* much. There, I can see too beautifully now. You *are* kind. Do come back and talk when you 've stopped ushing, won't you ? We 'll keep this place for you.

MOLLY : What a dear man !

OLIVIA : I know. Now, darling, I must hear what happened last night. What did he say ?—by the way, I hope you noticed the bridesmaids as we came in. Their faces were mauve and their teeth were literally chattering. I must say, organdie in mid-winter seems a bit hard. I saw Greta—did you ? Have you ever been to a wedding where Bobby wasn't an usher and Greta wasn't a bridesmaid ? And is she losing her looks or was it that particular shade of blue doing her down ?

MOLLY : I think she *is* getting rather ugly ; but, then, of course, she is very old now—quite twenty-five, I should think.

OLIVIA : I wonder she hasn't got off, really. So what were we talking about ? Oh, yes, last night. Did he say anything definite ?—damn that organ ! is it necessary for it to play so very loud ? I simply can't hear myself speak. There 's Lady Rainbow. I hope I shall look like that when I 'm seventy—it 's simply grand.

MOLLY : Mummy says it 's pathetic at her age, but I don't agree. I absolutely love her appearance.

OLIVIA : I must say the church seems to be filling well. But what extraordinary-looking people the bridegroom has got on his side ! Who is he, anyway ?

MOLLY (*vaguely*) : Oh, very dreary. He was killed in the war—I mean—you know. Awfully rich, though.

OLIVIA (*making up her face*) : That 's good. There 'll be some nice jewels to gloat over at the reception. I love seeing jewels, don't you ? I wonder who that old lady is ? She keeps giving me such nasty looks.

MOLLY : That 's Lady Norah, Gladys's mother. Perhaps we ought to talk just a little more quietly.

OLIVIA : Darling, we can't. The organ is making such a filthy row ; it 's getting louder every minute, too. I *say*, my nails need doing. All that varnish has peeled off since this morning. I feel absolutely ashamed of them. And I can't get my gloves on, either. They have made themselves into a sort of apple-pie bed inside the fingers.

MOLLY : Velvet ones always do : I 've noticed that.

OLIVIA : Now do let 's hear all about last night—I say, everyone is turning round. D'you think she can be coming ?

MOLLY : Look—quick—there 's the bridegroom !

OLIVIA : My dear, how awful ! He 's exactly like King Kong. No wonder the poor girl is defying superstition. I suppose she feels there 's no more point in sucking up to it once she 's married to that object.

MOLLY : Yes, well, she 's no Academy picture herself, you know.

OLIVIA : I think she *must* be coming. Yes, that 's " Oh, Perfect Love " all right. Are you going to stand on the pew ?

MOLLY : Well, what do you think ? We 're a bit far in front for that, aren't we ? Here, have my hassock. I 've seen her before.

OLIVIA (*in a horrified whisper*) : I say, she *is* a louse, isn't she ? Whatever will their children be like ?

MOLLY : Just have a look at the bridesmaids' shoes, will you ?

(*They go off into peals of hysterical laughter*)

OLIVIA : Hullo, Bobby, darling ! Where have you sprung from ?

(Continued on page 74)

"Gracious ! I haven't run like that in years. I say, that man didn't take us running, did he?"

CAT *and* MOUSE

Pantomimes Aren't Always Funny

By Caswell Garth

Illustrations by Eric Fraser

THE man in front of the mirror peered into it anxiously, put another blob of red on his comic button of a nose, and then, as the door of his dressing-room opened, turned, startled. The newcomer threw away his cigarette, which he had smoked down to the last half-inch, trod it into the bare boards of the floor, and looked around him.

"Fine to be some folks, with a room to yourself. There are five of them sharing the one next door."

The man before the mirror grunted.

"A fat lot of use a room to myself is if anyone can walk right in. I could have sworn I locked that door."

"Well, you didn't, see?"

"It wouldn't have hurt you to knock, would it?"

"My mistake. Of course, I'm nobody. Only the manager of the duddest pantomime that ever went on the road."

Teddy Rumford, comedian, turned again to his mirror, waving his hand to the beer-bottle and glasses that stood beside it.

"Help yourself. And leave some for me while you're about it. I could have sworn I locked that door . . . I always do."

His companion poured out two drinks.

"All right, *all* right . . . I'll go out and come in again. How will that suit you? 'Enter Third Murderer . . .' That's a bit from *Macbeth*, that is, my boy."

The man before the mirror put down the grease-paint he was using.

"Shut up, will you!"

"What's the matter now?"

"You are. You know what they say in this business. Call it superstition, if you like, but quote *Macbeth* in a dressing-room and something happens. Always."

"The only thing that'll happen to us is that we'll have the bailiffs in."

"That's right. Go on! Tell me I'm no good. Say it's my fault that we're only playing to twopence a week."

"I didn't say so. I've told you before, you're a born comic—when you feel like it."

"Thank you for nothing."

"It's that damn cat that's the trouble."

Teddy Rumford looked up sharply, added some more red to his nose, and reached out for his drink.

"You've noticed that, have you? Well, it was you gave him the part. I warned you."

"We couldn't do *Puss in Boots* without a cat."

"You needn't have signed up Charley Langford for it. What did he want to put in for a job like this for, anyway? I know for a fact he had an offer from Breece and Levy for double this money, and turned it down flat."

"If you believe fairy tales like that——"

"I believe that one."

"Who told you?"

"Never mind. I told *you* he was always drunk, didn't I?"

"I didn't know 'always' meant all the time."

"More complaints from the front of the house, I suppose?"

"Yes. They won't stand for him much longer."

"Then get rid of him. Shove him in his notice, and look slippy about it."

"Don't be a fool! How can I, when we've still three weeks to play? Besides, if I sack him, Daisy will walk out too. And where would we be without a principal girl? That's what comes of engaging a husband and wife. It always spells trouble. Always. Not that *she's* much good. I only took her on to get him fixed up."

"Well, you wouldn't believe me. Hopeless, that's what he is. I told you so."

"And that's just where you were wrong. That man's the best cat impersonator I've ever seen. The best I ever want to see either. When he's sober."

"Did you see what he did to my scene with him last night?"

"I noticed you didn't get a single hand for it from in front."

"And who's fault was that! With him clawing up into my face and muffing all my best gags."

"Don't you kid yourself. Those gags aren't too hot, anyway."

"Now, look here——"

"All right, *all* right. You'd better hurry, if you don't want to keep the stage waiting."

"If you'd shut up talking. . . . Here, give me that towel . . ."

And so, for a time, there was silence in the dressing-room. Not broken until Teddy Rumford had completed his make-up to his satisfaction. When he had looked at his puffed, self-satisfied face in the mirror, preening himself.

"I TELL you there's something wrong with Charley Langford. You were a fool to take him on."

"What do you mean—wrong?"

"Something sort of queer."

"He's a thundering good cat. To see him lap up that saucer of milk. . . . I watch him from that side at every house."

"He's too good. Slinking, creeping, prying. Peering round. Twice, when I've come off the stage, I've found him sitting up here, curled round in that chair. And he's just got up, and gone, without a word. I don't like it, I tell you! Sometimes I've thought he was going to—pounce."

His companion laughed. "Nerves, that's what's the matter with you. Why, when I came in just now you looked up as if you'd seen a ghost."

"Don't be a damn fool! And hand me that wig. No, the other one! You must have noticed yourself there's something—about that fellow."

"Not me. Except that he puts away too much drink. He's always practising his stuff, of course. Going over his part in corners. But there's nothing unusual in that."

"Not in a man arching his back and almost spitting at you when you pass?"

"That's only his fun. The trouble with that fellow is he can't forget he's the best cat that ever walked the stage. He's always at it. On and off."

"He ought to be good at it by now, too."

"When did he start the cat stuff?"

"He's never worked anything else, as far as I know."

"You've been with him before, haven't you?"

"Once. About five years ago. Just after he married Daisy."

His companion put his glass down.

"Anything in that talk about you two?"

The comedian turned, abruptly.

"What d'you mean—'talk'?"

"That you and Daisy . . ."

"No. At least . . . it's over now. It was over long ago." He laughed coarsely. "She's not much to look at, now, is she?"

"She used to be a real peach once."

"Yes; once."

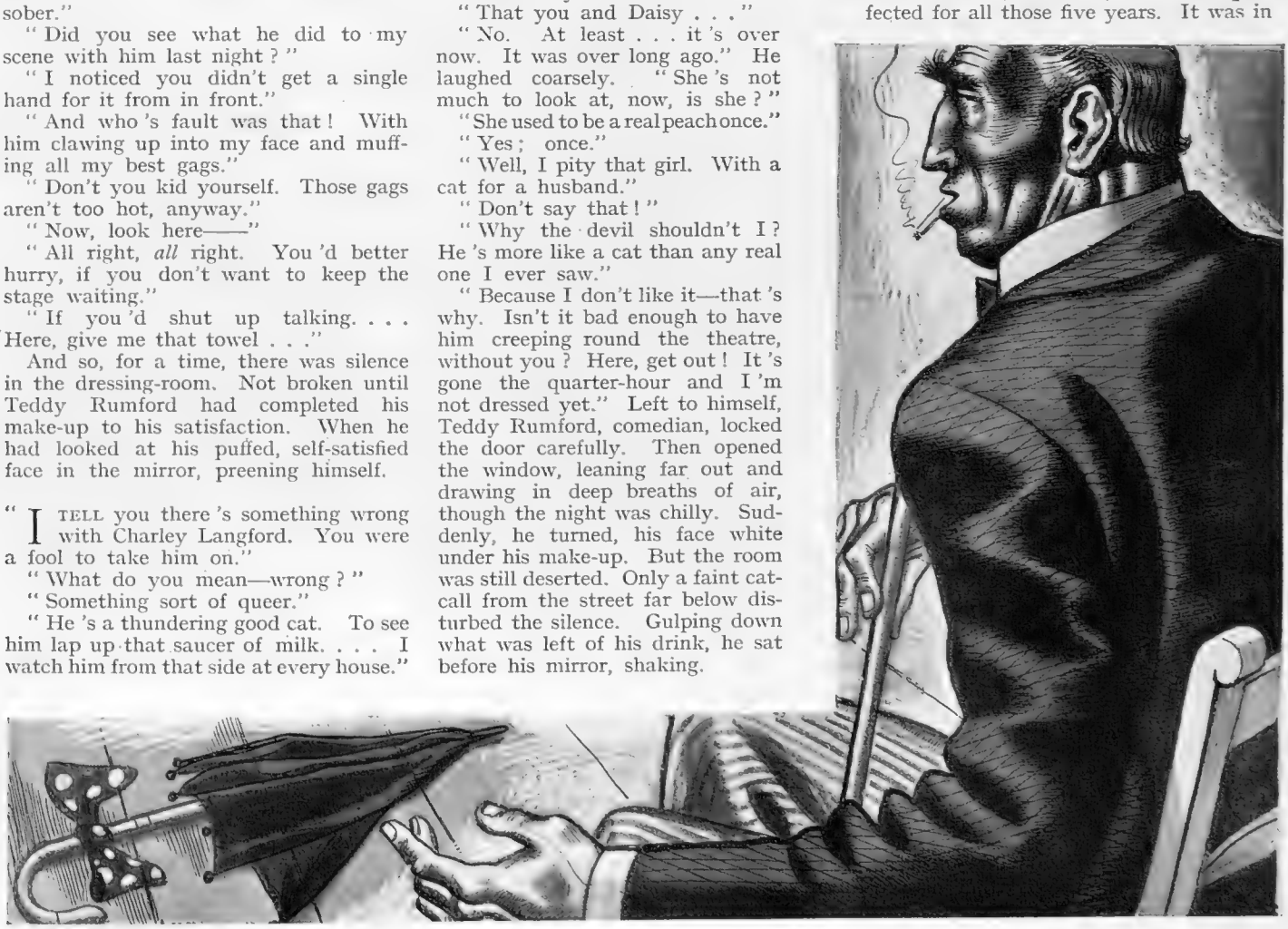
"Well, I pity that girl. With a cat for a husband."

"Don't say that!"

"Why the devil shouldn't I? He's more like a cat than any real one I ever saw."

"Because I don't like it—that's why. Isn't it bad enough to have him creeping round the theatre, without you? Here, get out! It's gone the quarter-hour and I'm not dressed yet." Left to himself, Teddy Rumford, comedian, locked the door carefully. Then opened the window, leaning far out and drawing in deep breaths of air, though the night was chilly. Suddenly, he turned, his face white under his make-up. But the room was still deserted. Only a faint cat-call from the street far below disturbed the silence. Gulping down what was left of his drink, he sat before his mirror, shaking.

IN a near-by theatrical lodging-house, Charley Langford, cat impersonator, sat before the fire in his dingy room, and purred. At last he knew what he had always wanted to know. And he sat there, his thin shoulders hunched up, his bony hands continually passing and re-passing across his straggling, sandy hair, and purred. He'd got it from her at last! The truth. After five years. Five years of almost ceaseless questioning and cross-examination. Now he knew. KNEW. Not just suspected. And he hugged the knowledge to himself. Through the open door of the room he saw his wife pass through the hall on her way to the theatre. He heard the front door close behind her. For him, however, she had already ceased to exist. He had hated her ever since, almost immediately after, their marriage; he had suspected that she had been unfaithful to him. But he hadn't left her. It had amused him to keep her under his eye. To see her start and tremble every time he spoke to her for fear he was returning to his questioning. And she could never leave him. Because, without him, she would never get work. They both knew that. Her, managements took grudgingly; but it was him they really wanted. Him, Charley Langford—cat impersonator. He smiled, his yellow, wrinkled flesh creeping back slowly from his small, sharp teeth. Funny that he should be playing again in the same company with the man who had stolen her from him within a year of their marriage. Very funny. And so convenient. Because, now he KNEW, he could at last put into execution a plan which he had considered, tested and perfected for all those five years. It was in



order that he could put his idea into practise that he had taken such a third-rate engagement. For that reason he had recently brought his endless questioning to a ferocious head. Because he had to KNOW. One couldn't murder a man, even if one had hated him for five years, until one KNEW. Now that he did know, however, on her own confession, beyond the shadow of a doubt, there was no immediate hurry. His plans were laid. He was frequently the last in the theatre. He had no make-up to put on. Only his fur suit to slip into. And to-night he might even keep the stage waiting for a moment or two. But he wouldn't keep it waiting as long as another member of the company would that night. Not quite so long. . . . He stretched himself lazily, bending nearer the fire and looking into its glowing depths contentedly. Some things, he reflected, are worth waiting for.

THE call-boy, engaged on a "tips-only" salary basis, was standing anxiously beside the stage manager.

"I tell you he must be ill. I've knocked five times and there's no answer."

"But we're ready to ring up! We're late now. Why the devil didn't you go right in? Is the door locked?"

The boy nodded. The stage manager swore. "I'll come up with you."

There was a crowd round the comedian's dressing-room door when they reached it. A crowd knocking and shaking it. Shouting. The stage manager looked round him nervously, listened a moment, then grabbed one of the "supers" by the arm. "Here, you! I don't like the look of this. Not by a long chalk, I don't. Get off for a doctor. And the police. And look sharp."

"The police?"

"That's what I said, wasn't it? There's something I don't like about this. He was talking kind of queer when he came into the theatre. Hurry, now!"

Turning, he addressed two girls who were leaning against the wall, their eyes wide with interest, their scanty stage frocks showing up dingily against the liquid-white powder with which their arms were daubed.

"Get out of this! The whole lot of you. Down on the stage. And quick about it. Where's the 'double-act'?"

Two foreign, muscular-looking men sorted themselves out from the crowd. The stage manager looked them up and down aggressively.

"If you two had as much brains as you have weight, you'd have had this door down by this time. He may be ill, dying! Anyway, here goes." He took a pace backwards. "We'll do it together."

The three men hurled themselves at the door. The flimsy lock gave instantly. They did not, however, advance more than three paces into the room. Instead, they stood in the doorway, staring. Silent. The comedian was not dying. He was lying back in his chair. With his throat slit from ear to ear. And his face was curiously torn and scratched.

THERE was no performance of *Puss in Boots* that night. Instead of a comic Harlequinade policeman closing the performance, three very real ones held the stage instead. An Inspector, with two constables. They sat at a table, with the company grouped round them. A strange, ragged crowd they looked, with overcoats huddled on anyhow over their gaudy stage trappings. The stage was still set for the first scene of the pantomime. A kitchen. Beside the Inspector's table stood the saucer of milk from which the cat drank on his first entrance—to the delight of every child in the audience. Now it stood unnoticed. Incongruous, somehow. The Inspector had an open note-book in front of him.

"Then you were all in the theatre by the time the boy called the quarter-hour? Is that right?"

A little man edged himself forward. "All but me, Inspector."

The Inspector looked at him and couldn't help smiling. The man looked so ridiculous in his fur suit as the cat, the head thrown back on his shoulders like a cowl.

"Where were you?"

"Just having a 'quick one,' Inspector. At the place across the road. Plenty of people saw me there. They'll tell you I was there all right."

"How long did you stay there?"

The little man thought a moment. "Ten minutes. Perhaps a bit more."

"A longish time, for one drink?"

The little man smiled ingratiatingly, almost looking as if he expected to be stroked.

"Now I come to think of it, it may have been two I had. Bitters, they were. It's thirsty work, being fixed up in this fur suit, you know. But I was over there the whole time. Except for one half-minute."

"What were you doing then?"

"I just popped across to the stage door to ask if the quarter had been called."

"That's right, Sir." The stage door-keeper came forward. "He wasn't with me for three seconds. Just put his head in through the door like."

"Right," the Inspector nodded, closing his note-book. And the man in the fur suit backed away, lost in the crowd. Puzzled, the Inspector scratched his head.

"That door was locked on the inside. So the man that did this job got in through the window all right. But he can't have done! That wall is as sheer as a cliff!"

The stage manager stepped forward. "There's a drain-pipe running up it, though."

The Inspector laughed. "I'd like to see anyone climb that! I've looked at it myself. No one could get up that. It's loose from the wall in places." He turned to one of the constables. "How high up did I say that window must be?"

"Forty feet, at least, Sir. And the wall is plastered. It's as smooth as glass."

The inspector turned to the stage manager.

(Continued on page 70)

From Generation to Generation —

Dewar's

FAME

BY FRANK FORD

BY APPOINTMENT
TO H M THE QUEEN

Fancy me choosing Yardley's for you too!

"I don't mind confessing, John, that choosing your Christmas present other years was a bit of a problem. But this year it's been such a relief to discover Yardley's Gifts for Men. Can't think why I missed them before. And I simply love their gay little boxes—choosing for someone else is as thrilling as giving yourself a present."

"That's the way I felt about it, too, Joan, and I wanted to get you something really lovely... This Gift Case of Yardley's, now . . ."

"John, you DARLING! I saw that when I was getting yours and thought how heavenly it was . . ."

This Yardley Gift Case cost John . . . 21/-

Gifts

The Yardley Lavender, in Sprinkler Bottles from 1/3 to 10/6, and in Larger Sizes up to 2 Gns. Lavender Soap—"*The Luxury Soap of the World*"—2/6 a box of three tablets, Complexion Cream 2/6, Complexion Powder 1/9, Compacts 2/- & 3/-, Bath Salts 2/6 to 10/6, etc.

And there is a great variety of Gift Cases for Men and Women from 2/- to 30/-

Prices do not apply in Irish Free State

Of all Chemists, Coiffeurs and Stores

This Yardley Gift Case for Men cost Joan . . . 8/6

YARDLEY
33 Old Bond Street
LONDON

YARDLEY LAVENDER

Brightly Shone the Stars that Nigh

The guests at this happy Christmas party for film-stars are arranged something like this (starting in the top left-hand corner): a Marx brother massages Marie Dressler's hair; Janet Gaynor and Sylvia Sidney ask her to join in the fun; Zasu Pitts and Douglas Fairbanks emerge from behind the tree; William Powell talks to Marlene Dietrich (in a jockey cap); Gloria Swanson, Katharine Hepburn, and Adolphe Menjou pull a cracker with George Raft and Mae West; Maurice Chevalier and Jack Hulbert try and cheer Joan Crawford up, in the foreground. Circling round the tree

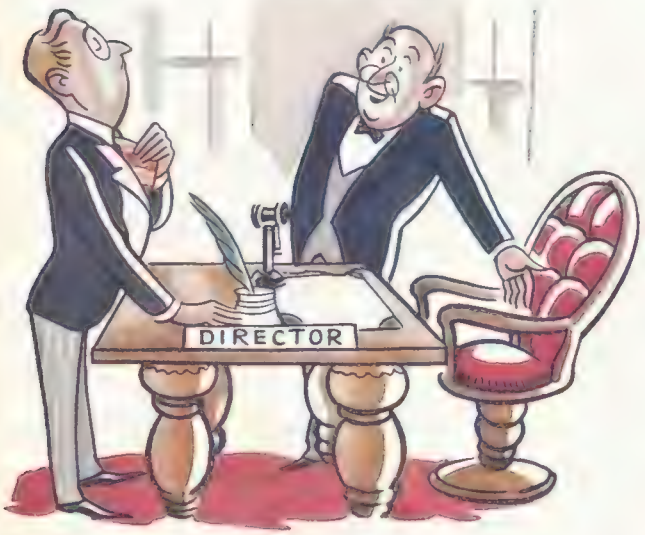
ıt, Making Christmas Whoopee . . .

are Marion Davies (pink cap), John Barrymore (yellow cap), Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, Eddie Cantor (matador hat), Joe Brown, George Arliss, Peggy Hopkins Joyce, and Harold Lloyd. On the right are Greta Garbo, Slim Summerville, Jessie Matthews, Sydney Howard, Clark Gable (green jersey), Will Rogers, Clara Bow (green hat), Jimmy Durante, Wallace Beery, and Jeanette Macdonald, and Harpo Marx playing his harp; Laurel and Hardy are busy with Chinese lanterns on the Christmas-tree, and Jean Harlow, as a platinum baby blonde, is receiving Mickey Mouse's attention

Testimonial to the Old

I have always found my old School Tie—

—inspires immediate respect—



—in business—

—in marriage—

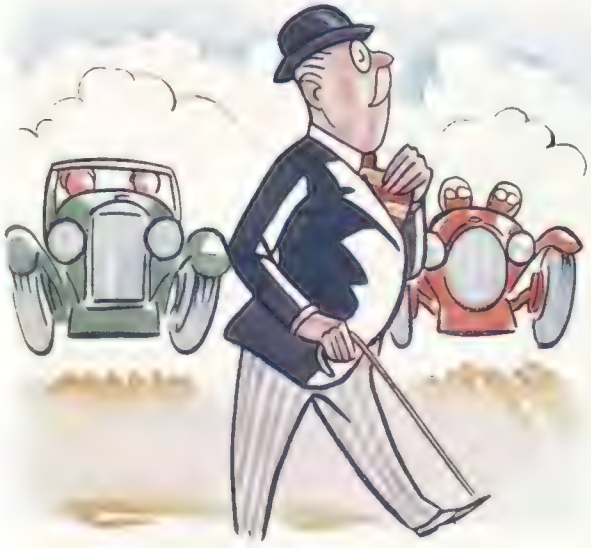
—in the family—

—in sport—

School Tie: By Patrick Bellew

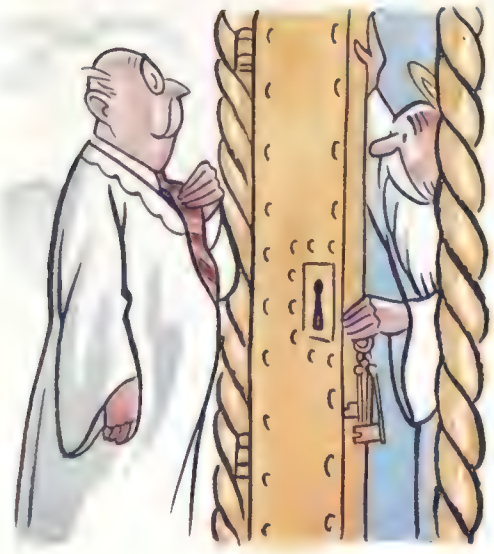
—among savages—

—and even in war!



And although motor cars—

—are no respecters of persons—



—I feel sure that in the Future—

—one will find the right sort—with the right tie

The present that earns a really genuine "thank you"

Shirts by

VANTELLA

ZEPHYR **9/3**

Collars to match by

VAN HEUSEN

10/6 POPLIN DE-LUXE

1/3 EACH

ADVERTISEMENT OF COTELLA, LTD., 72-73 FORE STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

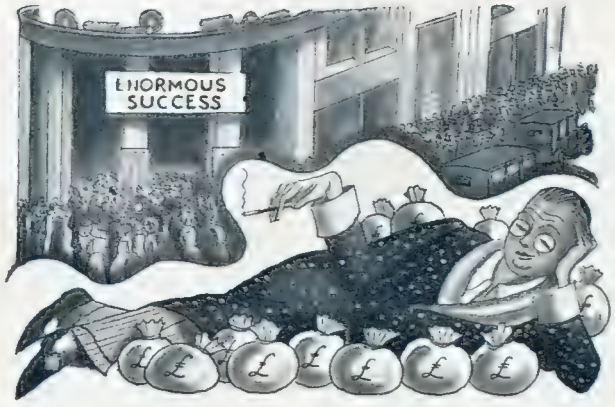
Vantella Shirts and Van Heusen Collars are entirely British

Our Self-Help Department for Perspiring Dramatists

This Brontë-Barrett Business...

The Biographical Play has come to stay. Here are some Ready-made plots generously given away by

Harold Simpson



Décor by Batt

THIS article should have a world-wide appeal, because (1) everybody writes a play nowadays; but (2) not everybody gets his (or her) play produced; or (3) even if he (or she) does, it is not always successful. My aim, therefore, is threefold: (1) To teach you to write the proper sort of play, from which (2) and (3) follow as a matter of course.

Now everybody who knows anything about the theatre will tell you that the minute one manager has a popular success, every other manager immediately casts his eye around for any author who has a similar type of play up his sleeve. Now what is the type of play which is most in vogue at the moment? Why, of course — THE BIOGRAPHICAL PLAY. Very well, then.

THE first move, as they say in chess, is to select your Biograph, or, in other words, the person, male or female, dead or alive, round whom you are going to write your play. Here you have unlimited scope. Any Dictionary of Biography will supply you with quite a lot of subjects to choose from. Opening mine nonchalantly at random, for instance, I find such names as the following: ABDALLAH - BEN - ABDEL - MOTTALIB (this, however, would be difficult to get on the bus signs); BOLESLAS I.; CHRISTINA OF PISA (you could drag in the Leaning Tower here, if it was already leaning in 1400—if not, no matter, nobody will be any the wiser); CHRISTIAN TOBIAS DAMM (good chance for frequent word-play here!); or, jumping alphabetically, FRANCISCO RODRIGUEZ LOBO (you *might* be able to drag in "Yo-Yo"), GIUDITTA PASTA (be careful—she was Italian, not French!); JOHN SMITH, etc., etc.

But, just in case you haven't time (or a Biographical Dictionary) I propose to offer you, free of charge, some ideal subjects for Biographical Plays, together with a few hints as to how such subjects should be treated. These subjects are, as you will see, all carefully combined with types of plays, other than biographical, which are popular at the present time.

Let us start, then, remembering that the Highbrows must be catered for, with the Psychological Biographical Play. The subject I offer you for this is:—

"OLD MOORE."

(*This is an excellent subject, as it enables you to bring in bits of "Julius Cæsar" and "The Wandering Jew" when nobody is looking.*)

ACT I.

A public place in Rome. Flourish of trumpets. (*Can be cut out if the Manager doesn't keep trumpets.*) Enter Julius Cæsar, Antony, Brutus, Cassius, and Casca (*and Uncle Tom Cobleigh and all*). A great crowd following, among them a SOOTHSAYER.

(*NOTE.—I have put SOOTHSAYER in capital letters because he is really the chief character in the play. When I tell you that he is also really OLD MOORE in his first incarnation, you will understand what I am driving at.*)

Now, here's just a brief idea for the opening dialogue:—

OLD MOORE: Cæsar!

CÆSAR (*starting*): Ha! Who calls?

CASCA: Bid every noise be still!

(*Flourish of trumpets—if the Manager, etc.*)

OLD MOORE: Beware the Ides of March!

"Old Moore"

Winning the Irish Sweep and being made an Honorary Life Member of the Girl Guides

"Blondel"

An assassin rushes forward and stabs Blondel just as he has reached his top C

(*NOTE.—If you would prefer not to quote the actual Shakespeare line, change it to "Beware the First of April!" In that case, the dialogue could go on as indicated.*)

CÆSAR (*angrily*): What fool is this?

CLOWN (*taken from any Shakespeare play that has a clown in it*): An April Fool, my lord.

CÆSAR: Ho! (*NOTE.—A change from "Ha!" Avoid repetitions!*) Doth one fool call another fool, good fool?

(*NOTE.—This isn't really repetition!*)

OLD MOORE: Beware the Ides of March! (*or "First of April"*).

CÆSAR (*angry*): That strain again!

OLD MOORE: Beware the ——

CÆSAR (*furious*): No Moore!

NOTE.—The double "o" is intentional.)

CÆSAR (*continued*): For this shalt thou be allotted to 'arp on the almanac through all the ages!

END OF ACT I.

Now you see where THE WANDERING JEW comes in, as, according to contemporary commentators, Cæsar was referring to a Jew's harp. For ACTS II. to XIV. you can use any period of history you require. I suggest that ACT XV. should be modern; Old Moore as a racing tipster on Epsom Downs would be suitable, as he is bound to have had his ups and downs by then. For ACT XVI. (and last), I would suggest a short Tableau—Old Moore (still in his long, white beard) winning the Irish Sweep and being made an Honorary Life Member of the Girl Guides.

NEXT we come to the Musical Biographical Play. Here I have the very subject for you, namely—

"BLONDEL"

(*NOTE.—Remember that the great thing about a musical play is that your hero must never stop singing. Get Herr Richard Tauber and success is assured.*)

PROLOGUE.

Scene: outside a tower. Blondel discovered singing. Richard Cœur de Lion appears at the window. They sing a duet.

ACT I.

The Court of King Richard in England. Robin Hood is captured, and, on being brought before the King, bursts into song. Immediately he opens his mouth it is discovered that he is really Herr Tauber—or Blondel—who has taken to an outlaw's life. He and Richard (of England, not Tauber) fall on each other's necks and again sing a duet. A love interest being needed, Richard presents Blondel with one of his favourite Court Ladies, and the Act ends with marriage bells.

ACT II.

In Palestine. Coronation of Blondel as King of the New Jerusalem, in consort with his Queen (the Court Lady aforesaid). The King (Blondel) and Queen sing a duet. Treachery! An assassin rushes forward and stabs Blondel just as he has reached his top C. He falls dead as the CURTAIN falls slowly.

ACT III.

In Palestine. Opening Chorus of Jews and Arabs either side of the Wailing Wall. A beautiful tenor voice heard from inside the wall, which opens, and lo! Blondel, who comes out singing and without dropping a single brick. He explains (in song) that his faithful Queen had him walled up thousands of years ago in this very wall—hence the term "Wailing Wall." After all those years, he is still singing—he must, because it's in his contract.

QUICK CURTAIN.

THIRDLY, the Murder Biographical Play, and for this I think you will agree that I have found the ideal recipe—

"MRS. BEETON"

ACT I.

The Beetons at breakfast.

MR. BEETON: The kidneys are bloody. (*Dies.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Mrs. Beeton arrested, at the instigation of the publisher of a rival cookery book, for the murder of her husband.

ACT III.

Trial scene at the Old Bailey. (*Sure card, this!*) The trial takes place before Mr. Justice Veale. The charge against Mrs. Beeton is that she did wilfully try every recipe in her famous cookery book, not on the dog, but on Mr. Beeton, whose death was caused thereby. After a vinegary opening by Prosecuting Counsel, Sir Canterbury Lamb, Mrs. Beeton is acquitted, thanks to the pungent speech for the defence from Mr. Rissole-Savory. The rival publisher shoots himself. Sensation in Court!

CURTAIN.

THAT will give you something to be going on with. But there is another type of play that is still popular—Farce. It would be as well, then, to include a Farcical Biographical Play. I have thought of a good subject—*BETTY MARTIN*. (Not Maria Marten, who was rudely bashed in the Red Barn.) Who is Betty Martin?—you may ask. My dear Sir (or Madam), have you never heard of the expression "All my eye and Betty Martin"? Of course you have. Well, there's your subject, and there's your title, excellent for farce, right away—

"Mrs. Beeton"

Mrs. Beeton arrested, at the instigation of the publisher of a rival cookery book, for the murder of her husband

"ALL MY EYE!"

ACT I.

SCENE: A Room with Seven Doors.

(*NOTE.—The more doors the better in farce.*)

Enter Pretty Parlourmaid with dust-mop. Enter Butler. Butler makes love to Pretty Parlourmaid. Enter Mr. Martin. Catches them. Dismisses Butler with flea in his ear.

Mr. Martin makes love to Pretty Parlourmaid. Enter Betty Martin from one of seven bed-rooms in gorgeous négligé.

(*NOTE.—This is only for Act I.—Betty gets more and more undressed as the play proceeds—naturally.*)

Betty dismisses P.P. with flea in her ear. Boxes Mr. Martin on one ear and bursts into tears. Mr. Martin leaves for the club to have his revenge at snooker. Enter Lover, who embraces Betty. Together they go into one of the seven bed-rooms. Enter P.P. with baby.

(*NOTE.—One baby is enough in farce.*)

P.P. places baby on divan. Then, with a knowing glance at whichever of the seven bed-rooms Betty and her lover have entered, P.P. exits chuckling.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

This Act chiefly consists of every character in the play taking turns to sit on the baby by mistake, and showing significant signs of guilt on discovering that it *is* a baby. Betty Martin (this being ACT II.) has discarded her gorgeous négligé in favour of urgeful undies. Everybody accused simultaneously of being the author (or authoress) of the baby.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

The plot now being exhausted (it was always a weakling) most of this Act can be taken up by the different characters rushing in and out of the seven doors. No, I'm wrong—six. Because the seventh, and centre, door is *not* a bed-room. It is (and this is the big surprise for the audience you have kept in pickle) a BATH-ROOM! Betty Martin (this being ACT III.) has discarded her urgeful undies and is sitting in the bath in *puris naturalibus*—well, *naturalibus*, anyhow. Just as she is about to rise from the bath, the Censor rushes in and the CURTAIN falls.

LASTLY, there is, of course, the War Play—for gentlemen only. This might be considered a little out of date now, but if, as seems likely, the present war with Australia is not over by Christmas, a Biographical War Play would probably be eagerly snapped up. The title is—

"BOWLER'S END"

ACT I.

SCENE: The Committee Room at G.H.Q. The Lords of Cricket in Council and completely stumped. The late W. G. Grace steps down from his picture to save his country in the hour of her peril.

ACT II.

Opens with the entire eleven (in trench helmets) receiving their final instructions from the Commander-in-Chief. At the end, they salute as one man, raising their trench helmets and disclosing their Harlequin caps underneath.

ACT III.

Things are going badly. England in danger! Australia has retaliated with body-line bowling. Only one wicket to fall and seven hundred runs to get. W. G. GRACE, disguising himself as the eleventh man (in his own black beard), walks to the wickets. A bumper is bowled in a bee-line for his body. He ducks. The ball enters his beard and falls into a spring-trap, cunningly concealed, which closes on it like a vice. W. G. GRACE starts to run. Probably—like Charley's Aunt (and your Biographical War Play) he's still running.

BLACK OUT.

"Betty Martin"

Just as she is about to rise from the bath the Censor rushes in and the curtain falls

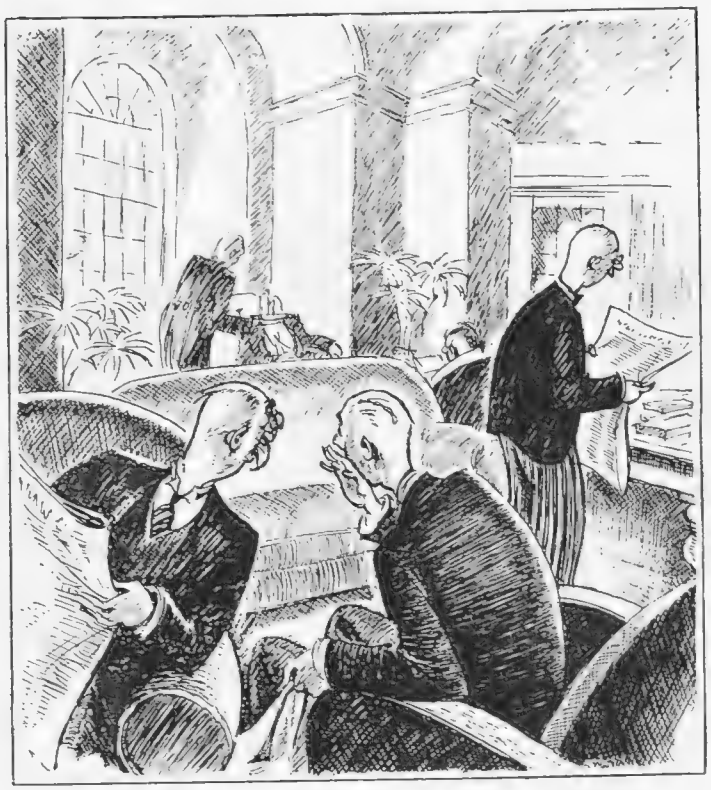
"Bowler's End"

W. G. Grace, disguising himself as the eleventh man (in his own black beard), walks to the wickets . . . He ducks

THE JOKE CONTEMPORARY

As Different Journals Might Treat It

By "Hailstone"



As our Mr. "Punch" might show it

First Clubman: "'Strordinary feller, that chap Blenkinsop—they tell me he practises Nudism in his bath-room."

Second Ditto: "Really! Well, I'm not surprised. I always thought he looked rather queer."

According to "La Vie Parisienne"

"Mais Madame! Le Nudisme ici!"

As featured by "The New Yorker"

"Noodism—aw, hell!"

And, finally, by "Simplicissimus"

"Aha! Der Kommunist treibt Nackt Kultur!"

All-Day Widows

A Four-Cornered Skirmish in which the Wives were Victorious

By Christine Jope-Slade

Illustrations by Stephen Spurrier

IT was cosy in the saloon. The grimness of the wet February night outside intensified the cosiness within, until the two men felt the atmosphere was in itself a warm kind of actual hospitality they were bestowing upon each other. They spoke with the mellow geniality of hosts.

"Another sherry, Praysing?"

"Mine 's a Bronx. Have a Bronx? Thonx."

"O.K. This is on me," grinned the other.

"Dirty evening," said Maurice Praysing.

"Foul! Ought to be pushing off, I suppose."

"Just one more to give us courage," said Maurice Praysing. He was beginning to think this chap, Clair Brown, had immense possibilities. He wanted surprisingly to make a friend of him. He wanted to tell him things quite desperately. Just silly, intimate things he had been saving up since he was quite small to tell just such a friend as Clair Brown would prove to be.

He thought of Irene waiting for him. He was just a safe old married man, going home for the millionth time to surroundings, atmosphere, food and conversation he knew by heart.

Yet Irene was a good girl and a good wife, and very pretty and smart. It was just Marriage itself that was wrong.

"What about giving the womenfolk a ring and doing a show, Praysing?" said Clair Brown jovially.

Clair Brown thought of Luella Brown waiting for him; and his youth and bonhomie sagged and wilted in him. It looked as if he and this fellow would do a spot of decent business together. Ought to celebrate; instead of being just the steady old married man beetling home for the umpteenth time to surroundings, food, outlook, point of view he knew by heart.

Yet Luella was a good scout, and as cute as they made them.

It was just Marriage that was irksome.

"O.K. by me!" exclaimed Maurice Praysing.

His mind bulged with the echo of the row he and Irene had enjoyed that morning. He couldn't shut it off.

"Very well. We 'll go and 'phone and then we 'll book a table at the Crovis and seats for some show. Get an evening paper, Praysing, and look 'em up."

It was just on the cards Luella might back out. They 'd said a few bright things to each other that morning during the breakfast bust-up! On the whole, he didn't encourage business wives meeting business wives. Too much chit-chat.

They found 'phones next to each other. They could see each other

through the glass and smiled reassuringly. Fortunately, they could not hear what the other was saying.

Irene Praysing was furious and most insulting.

She said: "You *would* wait until the last moment before letting me know! I 've got a chicken all in the oven, and I told cook she could have her young man in . . . and now they 'll have the run of the house while we are out."

"Then you *are* coming?"

"Of course I am. Do you think I have so much fun stuck here alone all day that I want to spend half the night alone, too? Who did you say he was?"

Meanwhile, Luella Brown was being exceedingly terse.

"Oh! All right! I *could* have had my hair waved and got my beige back from the cleaners—but *you* couldn't let me know! Oh, no! Is his wife coming? What 's she like?"

"Charming. You 'll like her. Your sort."

He did not believe it. Neither did he think that Praysing's wife would be charming; but the adjective he bestowed invested her with pleasing possibilities.

He was angry with Luella. He was fed up with her, with marriage, and with himself. Marriage was all wrong! He tried, being a decent fellow, to think it was his liver and the long, damp winter, but it was marriage all right! Marriage was the limit!

Maurice Praysing was going to meet a strange woman who might be worth while. Clair Brown was going to meet a strange woman who might be stimulating, charming, and provocative. The restaurant seemed to them both already gracious with rare and lovely women.

"London 's full of good-lookers these days," said Maurice Praysing.

"Never saw so many in my life," said Clair Brown.

IRENE PRAYSING had been broody all day, and she had been reading novels. These novels were about a woman successful with men and, through men, successful at life. Like most married Englishwomen, Irene Praysing knew no men. She only knew other husbands. She believed she could have been successful if only she could break out of the circle of husbands (her own and other people's), and reach that strata where men were simply men. Just waiting about to help an attractive woman, and give her a welcome little start in life.

As she dressed she thought desperately about this business friend of her husband's she was about to meet.

Born of her brooding and her novel-reading, she invested him with vivid emotional possibilities. He would at least be a new personality in her little circle. She had never heard of Clair Brown. She never gave a thought to his wife. If it was possible to "get him," she would get him. If this being-alone-all-day shut up in a house on a limited income, that they called marriage, went on any longer, she 'd go mad. Just an evening's experiment and stimulus, something to get a kick out of in a year of days all exactly like the last!

At the same moment, Luella Brown, Clair's active, quick-minded, vigorous better-half, was dressing after a long, inactive day, pent up by the rain in a small flat with nothing constructive to do. She was desperately bored and at the end of her tether. She would have taken a job, but the state of the market was such that there were few jobs and dozens of fully competent women to fill them. She was desperate for something to do.

The little hat shop run by the two wives was an almost unqualified success

Something to break the endless monotony, something to give her capacity for thought, feeling, exercise her brains on. In this state of mind, this auto-toxin outlook, she went, without a passing thought for his wife, to meet her husband's new business acquaintance, Maurice Praysing. Also to have a night out. She hoped something from the chance encounter and hoped it consciously.

It seemed to uneasy Maurice Praysing that Luella Brown was very beautiful. He had not expected old Clair Brown to own such a lovely little creature. He liked her voice, her brown furs, her brown eyes. She was like a small, vivid, polished horse-chestnut. There was that glint in her hair and her eyes. She excited him. He wanted to tell her about his boyhood, now invested with rich, tender colours. He had been such a lonely little chap. He wanted to get her away all to himself and tell her; pour out that lonely little chap business in great bucketfuls.

Irene liked Luella Brown at once. She thought she was smart, pretty and interesting. She thought she liked Clair Brown, Luella's husband, even more.

Much later on in the evening Clair Brown asked Irene Praysing to lunch with him at quite an expensive little place off Jermyn Street, and Irene accepted in a whisper.

It seemed to Clair Brown that his new friend's wife was quite irresistibly attractive. As the evening progressed through an excellent dinner to good liqueurs, he discovered she was the one woman in the world to whom he would gladly have gone home and talked exactly like one man to another every single night of his life; and never been bored. She was so fresh and amusing and gay, and her bright little scarlet nails were so cute and amusing; and she said such witty things.

Luella had been enough to put a man off his stroke—letting him down with those few acid remarks. He'd have a few kind words to say about it when he got home!

He wouldn't stand for it!

Other women found him amusing. This pretty little creature loved talking to him. They struck sparks off each other.

Luella Brown admired Irene Praysing wholeheartedly. She thought she was crisp and *débonnaire*. She entirely approved.

She thought she liked Irene's husband, Maurice Praysing, even more.

Just as they were leaving the restaurant for the music-hall, Maurice found time to ask Luella Brown to lunch with him at the Savoy next day.

She accepted hastily and enthusiastically as the other couple came within earshot.

Both men were a little bouleversés to hear their wives ask each other to tea next day, with every feminine symptom of good will.

Both accepted.

Did women talk over tea-cups?

Men knew very little about women really—and there was no one to ask but women.

Clair determined to find out from Irene next day.

Maurice determined to sound Luella Brown on the subject.

Two days later, Clair had tea clandestinely with Irene, with whom he thought he was in love, and she mentioned casually she had lunched with his wife.

"She's a lamb!" she said. "And she does amuse me so!"

"But you shouldn't!"

"Why ever not, my dear! I wouldn't have her know anything for worlds! I like her far too much."

Next day Maurice Praysing had a surreptitious and rather nervous tea with Luella Brown in his own office. He was rather obsessed with Luella. Luella mentioned casually she had lunched with his wife the previous day.

"I like her more than any other woman I have met for years. We suit each other, too. We 'd be a riot if we ran anything together."

"Yes—but isn't it a bit below the belt?"

"What—you and me? Don't be ridiculous. I 'd sooner cut my tongue out than let her know! She 's sweet!"

Women took a lot of understanding!

LIFE had altered for the two men; a lot of excitement, annoyance, worry, speculation, and curiously immature thrills had silted into it. They were perpetually on edge. Their consciences worried them terribly.

They were in love with each other's wives.

Life was a series of arranged telephone calls, carefully addressed notes, little stupid, unsatisfying and yet delicious rendezvous, moments dreamed of ravenously beforehand, snatched at greedily, melting away and meaning nothing afterwards.

What disconcerted them both secretly was not the concealed fact that they were in love with each other's wives; that the traditional male code could concede and overlook. Neither was it the fact that their wives did not know; that their masculine conception of life could cope with quite adequately—and did.

It was the fact that these wives were meeting almost daily, and wanted to go into business together.

Irene Praysing had made hats for a well-known house before her marriage.

Luella Brown had sold some of those hats at the smartest shops in London before she married Clair Brown.

"We 're all-day widows, with no children, and nothing to do," said Irene Praysing, perfectly logically. "We could run a hat shop and make money."

"If I go on being an all-day widow I shall go mad!" said Luella Brown. "Here 's a chance in a million! Irene 's a genius at hats, and I used to have a large connection. I could get in touch again."

By this time Irene Praysing palled a little on Clair Brown. The secrecy, once so fascinating, once so much a renewal of youth, irked a little. It would have been so much pleasanter if it had never existed! Also, Irene Praysing harped on one string; and it was an unfortunate one.

"Let Luella and me go into business, or your poor little wife Luella will just drift into the same emotional mess I 'm in with you. I tell you, all-day widows with nothing whatever to do are dangerous. I wouldn't have drifted into this if I had had something to occupy my mind."

And Clair Brown, who had long since grown bored with Irene Praysing, wished ungallantly that when they met she had been driving a traction-engine and knitting babies' vests at the same time! He went home to a wife who voiced the same plaint—and did not know how true it was, or how much it struck home. "Let 's go into business! Give us enough capital to start! We 've found a little place. Not too dear. I 'm sick of being an all-day widow, Clair. You can't think how boring it is."

MAURICE PRAYSING was beginning to realise he was forty-four. Luella Brown, the eternal other man's wife, didn't seem quite so amusing now. Sometimes, indeed, she seemed quite silly; almost but not quite as silly as he had been about her. All this business of the wives going into partnership was very worrying too. The whole business was excessively exasperating. Besides, he was nervous of Luella, he *had* to keep in close touch with her. Frankly, he didn't trust her. She was emotionally unstable. Given to sudden impulses. His business with old Clair Brown was prospering. It would be just like Luella, if he didn't keep a tight rein on her, to come all over emotional and confess to old Clair; and then the fat would be in the fire . . . or, if anything did come of the two wives' beastly shop idea, unbosom herself in a girlish heart-to-heart talk in a slack hour with his wife. They 'd be all day shut up together. Plenty of time to do it in.

The whole thing was very worrying for two perfectly humdrum, commonplace husbands and successful, mutually respecting business associates, who had, as a matter of fact, quite got over their fleeting fancy for each other's attractive little wives.

Women were incomprehensible.

Irene at home was most difficult. Always urging the aimlessness and emptiness of her life, and begging him to finance this hat business. She had Luella's abominable parrot-cry: "All-day widows." "You couldn't blame me or Luella if we crashed for someone, Maurice. What else have we got to think of? Novels and plays and cinemas all feed it. Sometimes I feel worried for Luella. She 's so passionate, and I don't think Clair satisfies her."

"You women must talk!"

"We shouldn't if we had anything better to do."

IN the end they got their hat shop: by threats, coaxings, coercion, and a sort of mental third degree that wore their husbands down. Actually, Luella got it for Irene; and Irene secured it for Luella; but the result was the same.

The business Clair Brown and Maurice Praysing were doing together continued to prosper, and they appreciated each other more and more. Only when they thought of their impulsive women folk shut up together day after day were they uneasy and full of disquiet. They were forced to keep in touch to find out how the wind blew. They were forced, wearily and warily, to maintain old relationships to keep the present one at its very necessary level. They would so much have liked just to settle down and forget it all. It went on and on.

"Would it go on for ever?" they asked themselves privately and wearily. "*What* a price to pay for a bit of fun!"

(Continued on page 72)

She came and sat on the edge of the bath and lazily soaped his back

WHEN THEY WERE VERY YOUNG

Four Very Infantile Lay-ettes

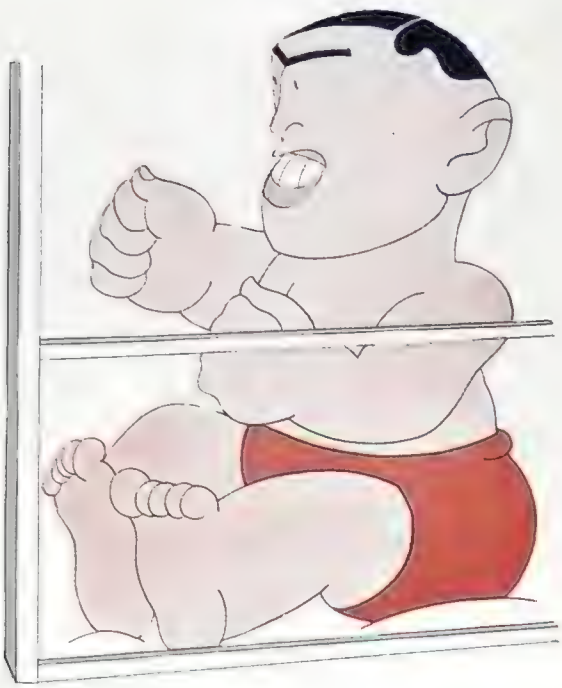
By Bovey

JACOB EPSTEIN

Who knows what little Jacob might have been
If they had never bought him plasticine?
His curious sculptures started on the day
He tried to model his own nose in clay.

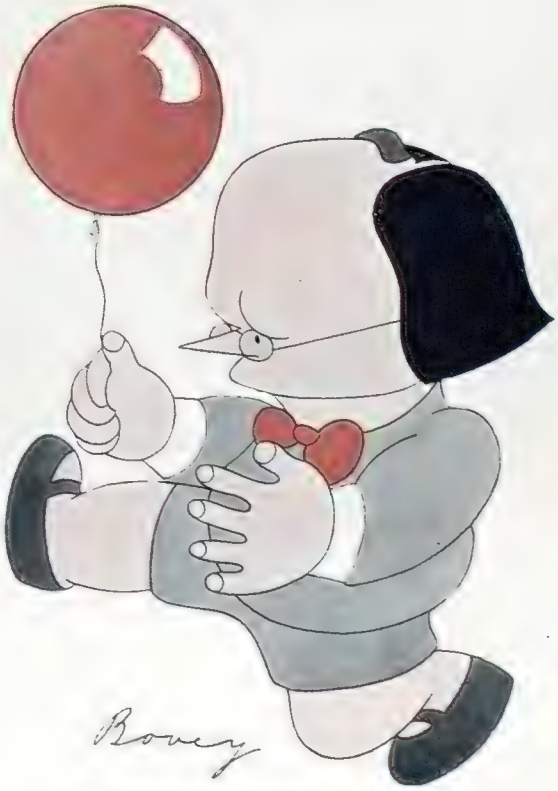
WINSTON CHURCHILL

Among the pampered Winston's many toys
(A Churchill must have more than other boys)
Were soldiers, paints, a trick cigar, and bricks,
And these, I think, explain most of his tricks.



PRIMO CARNERA

When baby Primo was a tiny tot
They found him shadow-boxing in his cot.
His pugilistic prowess started when
He floored his Nanny for a count of ten.



PROFESSOR PICCARD

And now observe this juvenile Walloon
As he plays happily with his balloon.
Even his doting parents never thought
He would become so famed an aeronaut.

The Hoofer *and the* Lady

She really was a lady, and only eighteen. She lived with the only unforgivable type of aunt: the type that throws a detestable philosophy of life at a young mind until it is compelled, in self-defence, to wrap itself in layers of silence and apparent stupidity. Mighty like a rose, I agree; and Alicia looked like one, too. She was one of those large, white, still girls, with a great deal of pale golden hair and eyes too large for human nature's daily food; and she ate less than nothing, because her mother had been inclined to fatten, if left alone, and Alicia, with a twenty-six-inch waist, was taking no chances.

The aunt was not at all like a rose; she was like the sweet but expensive champagne which is sold in bad clubs and leaves the drinker with a wicked hang-over. She was simply rabid to see Alicia make a good marriage.

She was to be pitied, if you look at the matter impartially, because she was always *just* getting the house properly furnished and the servants properly trained, and *just* getting to like a neighbourhood, and *just* beginning to think that Alicia was really starting to see sense at last; and then, out of the blue and human nature, the fashions in decorations changed and the servants ran amok and all the nice (read "rich") people left the neighbourhood and Alicia had an attack of ideals, and the aunt had to start all over again.

It was tough. The woman never got a chance really to relax and be herself.

However, she did not flag. A fortnight before Christmas she established Alicia and herself in a little, dull, exquisitely select old hotel tucked away at the back of the Haymarket, and began to scoop in invitations for her irritating niece.

The tap, tap, tap of twinkling feet on a susceptible maiden's heart

By Stella Gibbons

Illustrated by Clark Fay

They came easily and in flattering numbers, because the aunt, though nasty, was one of those women who automatically get asked to the nicest parties; her pedigree assured this. Alicia's name appeared with pleasing regularity on Corisande's page in the *Evening Standard*, among the names of young girls seen at dances. "Miss Alicia Paget, wearing a white dress sprinkled with tiny silver stars, was one of the prettiest girls there." "Miss Alicia Paget is one of the tallest girls in Society, and is a keen rider to hounds."

"I wish we hadn't chosen a Deernell dress, Alicia," said the aunt fretfully. "His gowns are *so* distinctive, and people will soon begin to *know* that dress."

Certainly Colonel Trumpet knew it. As soon as he entered a ball-room, he looked for the white dress with the silver stars, and as soon as he saw it, and Alicia's still, golden head poised on her long neck rising from its simple neckline, he mooned over to it and stood stiffly at her shoulder and asked her if she would give him the pleasure of a dance.

Alicia, egged (it is a coarse word, but must suffice) on by the aunt, usually accepted. She could not be said to dislike Colonel Trumpet so much as not notice he was there. He was forty—old, older than the rocks on which he sat; and who was interested in old men? Not Alicia. Girls who are foolishly romantic fall in love with middle-aged men as part of a routine, but girls like Alicia, who are burningly, secretly, silently romantic, seek youth.

Alicia did not seek it at the Pallorpheum, but it was there she found it. The aunt, among other faults, was painfully anxious to keep young, and followed the follies of the day so far as she might without getting herself talked about. When there were treasure-hunts, she hunted. When it was amusing to go and see *Maria Marten; or The Murder in the Red Barn*, at the Elephant and Castle, she went there too (hating it, but game as a cock-sparrow). And when these pastimes, like those of Babylon and Tyre, also had their day and were not, and were replaced by a rage for going to see Non-stop Variety, thither, bored but gallant, went Alicia's aunt.

She even went a step further, and held a party for a gang of silly people whom she had collected about Alicia, with the object of going on to the Pallorpheum later in the evening.

Everybody said this was *quite* marvellous, because they did so adore jugglers and tumblers and red-nosed vulgar comedians, and as for the chorus . . . had any of you ever *tried* to do even the *simplest* chorus steps?

Colonel Trumpet said, could he come too, and the aunt said, of course, that would be delightful.

"Poor old weazel, I expect it makes him pretty wistful," said one of the young men to Alicia, as they drove to the Pallorpheum in his car (Alicia having avoided, more by instinct than by desire, a ride in the Colonel's car).

"Why should it?"

"Oh, because I expect he remembers the naughty 'Nineties and all that. Pretty awful to see Nervo and Knox rioting over the very spot where Cora Pearl used to swoon about in yards of grubby lace, what?"

"Who was Cora Pearl, anyway?"

"Oh, a siren," said the young man vaguely, wondering why it did not seem indelicate to mention the name of any

On to the stage dashed a tall, dark man in tails, and two tiny, fair creatures in tights

"Howdy?" said Mr. Dunks. "You Miss Paget? I think it's swell of you to want to meet me."

famous living lady who was free with her favours, yet seemed in bad taste to talk about a dead one.

"Is this it?" asked Alicia, looking up at the winking red, gold, and green lights.

"This is it."

Well, the aunt got them all into their stalls, and Colonel Trumpet got himself next to Alicia, so he was happy, and this made the aunt happy, too. Poor woman!—give her a crumb, only a crumb, and she perked up at once.

Everybody felt it their duty to laugh very loudly, even if they had not been amused; but they soon really were amused, and the Colonel sat and listened for Alicia's pretty, low laugh. She was the only girl he knew who had not got a scream for a laugh when they were handing out laughs up above. No wonder the poor old man wanted to marry her!

And then, following quite simply and naturally on an unkind song about the darker side of marriage, given by a Mr. Stan Derby, came a speciality dancing act. "The Three Varconis," it was called. On to the stage dashed a tall, dark man in tails, and two tiny, fair creatures in tights.

"Hoofers," they call them in America. That means dancers; people who live by their hoofs and earn their bread and jam by the speed and grace with which they can move those same hoofs. Most people's feet, compressed all day in shoes and never shown to the grass, are far more like hoofs than the feet of most hoofers.

These hoofers were not extra-good. They were good, of course, because they would not have been on the vast stage of the Pallorpheum if they had not been, but they were no better than hundreds of other hoofers, here and in America.

But there was something about the young man . . . . Even now, even when I know how this story ends and you don't, and sorry as I am that it ends the way it does, I do have to hand it to the young man for that something. Grace? Personality? Charm? All three, perhaps, varnished over with the thick bloom, the mist, which only youth can give.

He had a low, slurred American voice, hoarse with exchanging back-chat with the rest of the Pallorpheum gang. He had hair across which the light lay in a blue-black bar, and a sweet, quick smile.

Right across yards of air, blue with smoke and quivering with reflected light, he found time and space to smile at Alicia.

"Angel!" thought Alicia, smiling back. "Oh, I wonder if either of those two little creatures are his wife—is, I mean."

Tap, tap, tap went his light feet across the dusty boards, in the pauses of the orchestra's music. He seemed to have no weight. He walked on his hands as easily as on his feet, and did wonderful, careless things with his hat and cane. And even when he was upside down, he still smiled his quick, sweet smile.

When he went off, on his hands and bent over like a croquet-hoop, Alicia felt a frightful pang. Oh, there he was again, waving at the audience, and twisting his legs in the most amusing way. Oh, a dear, funny, beautifully *fit* young man. Alicia had fallen in love.

"Chap has to keep in good condition to do that kind of thing," said Colonel Trumpet. "No drink."

Alicia did not hear him.

When it was time to go, Alicia shocked everybody by mulishly wanting to stay and see the show all over again.

(Continued on page i)

CONSTRUCTIVIST CHRISTMAS

By Marchant Smith

Decorations by Nicholas Parten

I'M sad because
Christmas isn't what it wause.
The cards I've received lately
Have been modern and most unsately;
People will send something amusin',
Whereas I like cut-out windows with vusin.
Now, for the sake of auld lang syne,
I get a banner with a strange desyne,
Printed on foil or cellophane—
Or else they don't write, they tellophane.
Well, my taste may be cheap,
But I prefer a sunset with a few snowblind sheap.

INSTEAD of decent presents,
Like port or a brace of pheasants,
They send some charmin' trifle,
Expensive and perfectly frighfle.
Even Christmas-trees aren't what they wir,
They 're making them of anything but fir,
And a conifer of glass and chromium
Does not look well on the old harmonium.
Synthetic holly makes me melancholly;
The mistletoe bough is lacquered nough;
And as for an electric candle,
I consider it an absolute scandle.

BUT however much one is annoyed
This sort of thing is hard to avvoyed.
Swastikas are no longer lucky or runich,
They stand for very nazi things in Munich;
Silver horseshoes are merely tuizas
To friends who drive Hispano Suizas;
And filling stockings arouses rauge
In lovelies who wear them hundred-gauge.
So perhaps, after all, this indictment
Is a lot of wasted excictment—
No more than superfluous steam; albeit
I hope Mr. Ogden Nash won't seit.

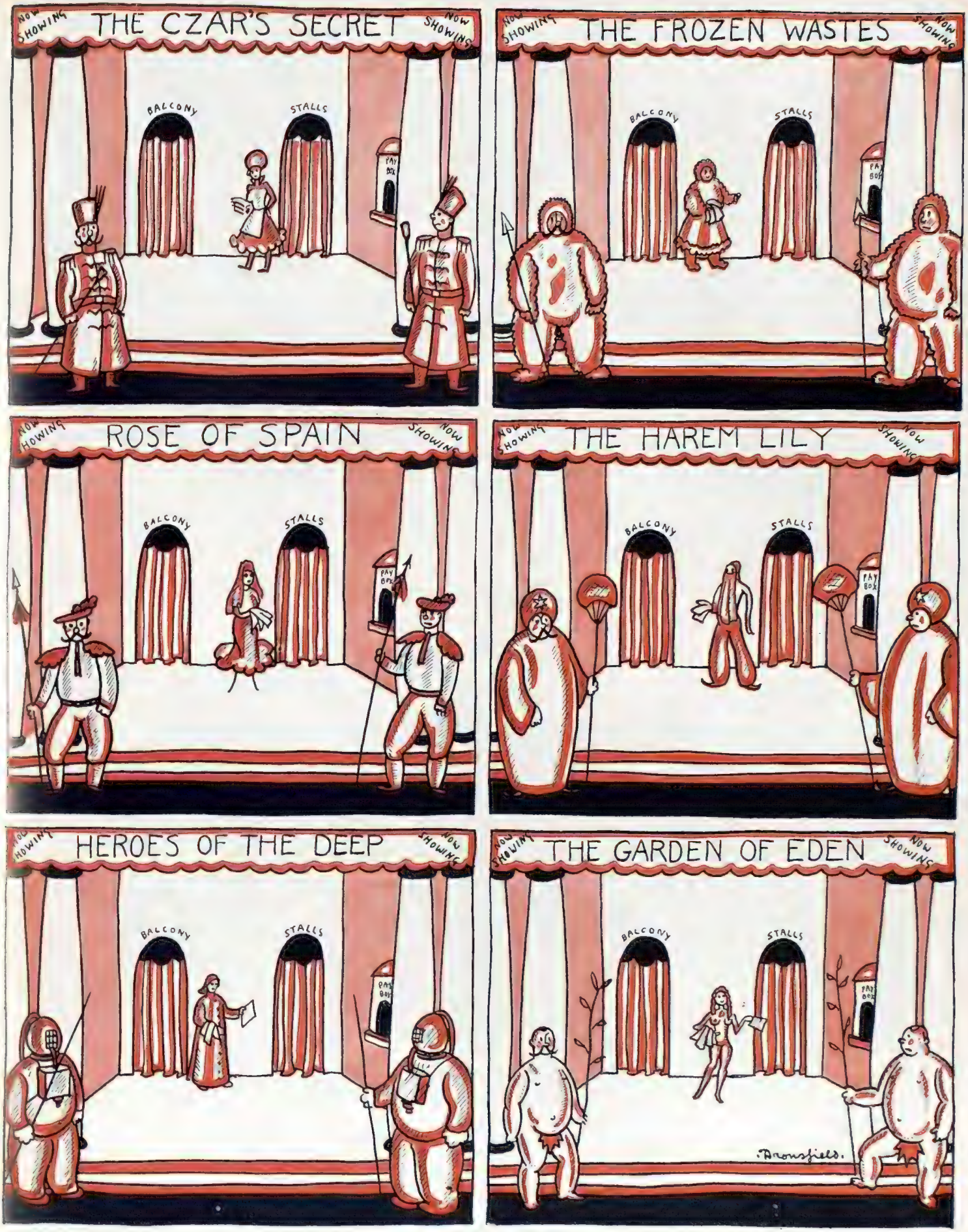
MARCHANT SMITH.

NOEL

Those GOOD Old Days...

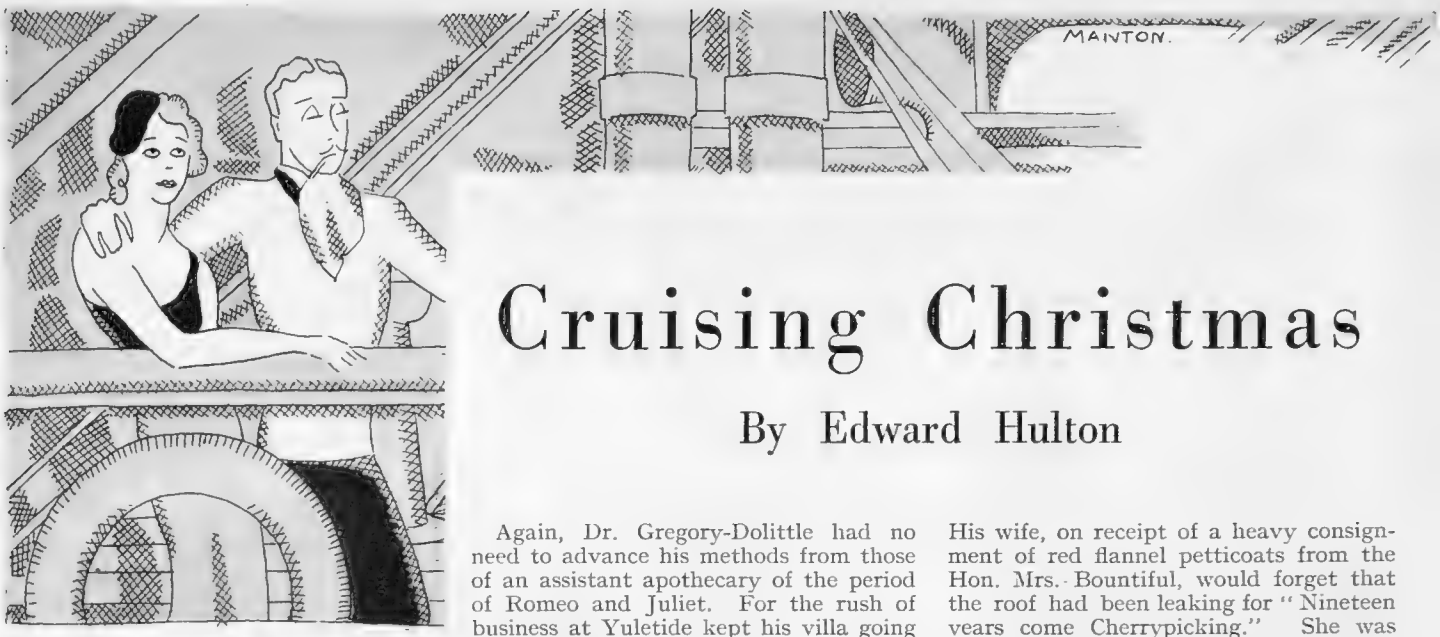
A Sermon from our Yuletide Uplift Department

By Patrick Bellew



"They Also Serve . . ." By Dronsfield

The 100 per cent. Police Dog



Leaning over the gunwale, they "gaze and gaze on the Pacific"

Cruising Christmas

By Edward Hulton

THE old-fashioned Christmas was the apotheosis of Victorian ideals! Plenty—if not Peace—reigned triumphant in the land. Only the massive solidity of Victorian furniture would have been able to support the mountains of food provided, or the hardly less mountainous forms of the consumers. The heroism of the age was well to the fore. The portly paterfamilias, with a smile on his bewhiskered face, faced imminent apoplexy. The children bravely forced back the threatening rumblings of immediate sickness and took yet another mince-pie. The ladies struggled like heroines to eat just one more portion of plum pudding, despite the pulverising pressure of their stays—drowning by a merry prattle the cacophonous crescendo of their creaking. In fact, when there was a loud report, who might say whether it were cork or corset? Luncheon barely concluded, at dinner the gentlemen again risked an unattractive death. In the meantime, three of the strongest aunts procurable had laced the petulantly palpitating daughter of the house into a yet more ruthless instrument of torture. This with a view that her complete inability to speak would be mistaken for maidenly modesty. Ensign Dundreary, from the neighbouring Hall, might take her seventeen-inch waist into his arms under the conveniently-placed sprig of mistletoe.

The coloured lithograph of the Prince Consort beamed down upon the Christmas Tree, satisfied that there could hardly be a more Germanic growth in all the forests of Saxe Coburg or even Gotha! But British Trade was not forgotten. Tariff Reform was unnecessary when Trade was supported by an annual epidemic of Gift-purchasing. The Christmas Present Business was one of the greatest Rackets in history. Nobody desired to perspire for many weary weeks in overcrowded emporiums in search of a present he did not want to give. Nobody but felt an inward contempt for the gift he had received with such tears of apparent joy. But not to give and to receive was to join the motley ranks of those who were "not quite nice."

Again, Dr. Gregory-Dolittle had no need to advance his methods from those of an assistant apothecary of the period of Romeo and Juliet. For the rush of business at Yuletide kept his villa going the whole year. There was Father's gout. For the pipe of port was not always a pipe of peace. Priscilla had several violent attacks of hysterics. Dr. Gregory-Dolittle would ascribe these to over-application to the water-colour she was painting of the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park. He would not be indelicate enough to put them down to the strain of receiving Ensign Dundreary under the mistletoe in tight corsets. The children, too, would usually continue in a state of profitable biliousness until their return to school.

Neither were "The Lower Orders" forgotten. Beer was stronger. After staggering from the "Wagon and Horses," even the Radical artisan felt that the world was nearly as pink as his nose.

Ensign Dundreary, from the neighbouring Hall, might take her seventeen-inch waist into his arms

His wife, on receipt of a heavy consignment of red flannel petticoats from the Hon. Mrs. Bountiful, would forget that the roof had been leaking for "Nineteen years come Cherrypicking." She was quite confident that, though the rich man was in his castle and the poor man at his gate, it was the Lord Our God who had ordered their estate!

IN this our Year of Grace, Yuletide still comes round. "But—oh! how changed." Christmas morning finds the family in beach pyjamas. A "Luxury Liner" ploughs a tropical sea. At the festive dinner a sylph-like Matriarch regales herself on one-quarter of a lesser quail in aspic, and one-third of a slimming biscuit. Gout no longer renders Father a furious fixture. A black band produces strains less appreciated in Bethlehem than Bechuanaland. The Paterfamilias tangoes four times nightly with a sub-débutante from the State of Carolina. Aunt Agatha's attention is not a wit devoted to her niece's "Fifty-Way Stretch Foundation Garment." It is fully concentrated in pouring her own exiguous form into Molyneux's latest creation, the better to charm the roving eye of the Staff Captain. Few have given or received gifts. But the shopkeeper's loss has been the gain of the King's Mercantile Navee! The children blush with horror at any traces of Yuletide sentimentality still lingering in the breasts of their parents. They are hotly discussing the Soviet Theatre. Darby and Joan have saved up for a vacation from Honeysuckle Cottage, Puddleton-on-Dullwater. Unencumbered by red flannel petticoats, Joan is in the "Tourist Class" Saloon performing a rousing Rumba, broadcast from Havana da Cuba. Captain Dundreary Brown and Miss Priscilla have temporarily forsaken the madding crowd's ignoble striving to keep their feet in a bursting ball-room, which no prisoner of Surajah Dowlah would have exchanged for the Black Hole of Calcutta. Leaning over the gunwale they "gaze and gaze on the Pacific." The lethargic Captain's arm is around her waist. But although the latter is no longer one of Britain's iron-clads, it palpitates to no thrill. "What about a spot of Honeymoon Cruising?" he suggests. Miss Priscilla yawns, "Why! For crying out loud! I expect that would turn out to be mainly bunk!"

Christmas in a Baloon

(or however you spell it)

An Episode of those Early Flying Days Before Bleriot and Amy Johnson

By Maurice Lane-Norcott

I have hypnotised the Editor of "The Bystander" and willed him to ask me to relate the story of my early ballooning days

I HAVE been asked by the Editor of THE BYSTANDER—or, rather, I have hypnotised the Editor of THE BYSTANDER and willed him to ask me—to relate the story of my early ballooning days and how once I planned to spend Christmas night off the earth.

This is a delicate task, for it involves the name of a lady, besides being difficult in a more practical way, owing to the sudden disappearance of my fountain pen. This fountain pen, which was practically my livelihood, was last seen under my desk on Friday. Since then both the pen and the desk have vanished and, in consequence, I am obliged to cut my thoughts on stone with a chisel.

I don't think that at this late date I shall be breaking any confidences when I say that the ballooning incident I am about to relate was primarily the outcome of a mad prank. It was not, as many may suppose, a serious scientific attempt to explore the stratosphere, which, in those early days, was spoken of reverently as "the heavens" and firmly believed to be peopled by angels.

I shall always remember that starry December evening at old Jolyon Forsythe's place* in the Bayswater Road when the idea of spending Christmas in the air "far from the madding crowd" was first mooted. There we were, a lot of distraught shoppers, all gathered together to decide what, if anything, was to be done for the best.

There was "A," the famous *bon vivant* and wit, who had once set the old Café Royal in a roar by setting it in a roar. Very few who were present on that occasion, I expect, will ever remember it. Then there was "B," the lawn-croquet ace; and pretty little Mrs. "C," who had recently got her bustle entangled in a high-bicycle race at the Crystal Palace and was now convalescing; and "D," the Official Receiver; and "E," the Open Fretwork Champion; and "F" and "G" and "H," of the Yeomanry; and a small, shy, kindly boy named "I," whom in later years I came to respect as Mr. John Galsworthy, the eminent saga-writer.

Well, there we all were, bothering our heads about Christmas, and wondering what on earth to give our relations that they hadn't got already. As you can well imagine, it was a pretty state of affairs.

Finally, towards midnight, something seemed to go snap inside "D," the Official Receiver, and he sprang to his feet with what, in those days, was called an oath.

"Oh, blow!" he exclaimed angrily. "Let's forget the pen-wipers, and the fretwork pipe-racks, and the hand-painted hair-tidies! Let's give Christmas the go-by this year!"

"But how?" demanded "E," shrewdly.

"Oh, be practical, 'D'!" cried "B." "Where can we hide?"

"Well, I suggest Epping Forest," said "G," of the Yeomanry, his military training in "taking cover" getting the better of his common sense.

"And I," sneered "H" nastily, for he was always painfully jealous of "G's" moustaches, "suggest the moon!"

"Now, now! No quarrelling, please!" lisped pretty little Mrs. "C" anxiously. "Couldn't we put our heads together and see what comes of it?"

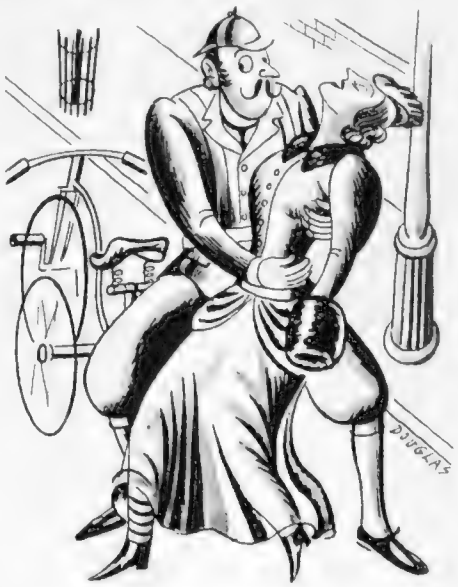
Well, at that we gave each other a knowing wink, but I am proud to think no one was cad enough to laugh outright.

And then, just when I least expected it, an inspiration came to me.

"Listen, you fellows!" I cried, springing on to a chair and waving a small Japanese fan with which I had been cooling my rum punch. "Listen to Mr. Lane-Norcott, please! Let's all spend Christmas in the air this year! Let's go ballooning!"

Well, as you can imagine, that unexpected suggestion created a furore. In an instant pandemonium reigned. Glasses were filled to the brim, toasts were drunk, and there was a great deal of excited cheering and shrill laughter. Finally, towards morning, we all sang the National Anthem in a very spirited fashion, and then, as the neighbours were beginning to complain, we broke up noisily and went our separate ways, vowing to meet again in full ballooning kit on Christmas Eve to "take the air."

Nowadays, of course, when air ventures are carefully planned, often weeks in advance, our little impromptu "dash aloft" must seem a very mad prank However, we were less introspective and neurotic in those days, and scarcely gave the matter a second thought. Indeed, it would have escaped my mind altogether if "D" hadn't called



"Oh, Sir! But this is so sudden!" she gasped

* See the Forsythe Saga.

round the following afternoon to discuss culinary details.

"Of course, you realise, L.-N.," he said solemnly, "that it will mean eating cold turkey and Christmas pudding?"

"I beg your pardon, 'D'?" I said vaguely. "I don't quite follow you, I'm afraid. *What* will mean it?"

"The gas," he said gravely. "Surely you wouldn't cook a turkey right under the gas bag, would you?"

Well, naturally, I had to shake my head at that. No matter how ill a man feels he can always be honest with himself.

"'D,'" I said frankly, "at this very minute I wouldn't cook a turkey under anything. Not even if I were starving."

"Furthermore," he said sternly, "I forbid you to burn brandy on the pudding or pull any of your silly crackers. You quite understand that?"

"Not exactly, 'D,'" I said dubiously, because, to tell the truth, I hadn't the faintest idea what he was talking about.

Well, to cut a long story short, "D" very kindly took me into his confidence and told me in a straightforward way what he was talking about, and I was simply horror-stricken. To think that I, of all people, should have committed myself to leave *terra firma* in one of those new-fangled balloons! That night, with "D's" assistance, I slipped quietly out of Mayfair on my tricycle and "lay low" in distant Chiswick.

It is not my intention to describe here all that occurred to me during those anxious hours of exile. That would take too long. Let it suffice when I say that midnight found me deep in conversation with a beautiful young girl whom I had had the misfortune to run over with my left-hand rear wheel. As was to be expected in the circumstances, wasn't long before the talk veered towards ballooning.

Of course, nowadays, I suppose, there is so much freedom between the sexes that a young man would think literally nothing of turning to the young lady he has run over and asking outright: "Do you care for ballooning, Miss—er—I'm afraid I didn't quite catch your name?" However, we had more reticence in those days.

Accordingly, with infinite tact, I led the conversation, in a veiled way, towards the delicate subject of kites, and only when I saw that I had given no offence did I bring myself to speak more directly.

"My dear young lady," I said cautiously, "we are now sufficiently intimate, I hope, for me—for Mr. Lane-Norcott—to ask you a leading question of the utmost importance. Do you—could you ever . . ."

It was not a serious, scientific attempt to explore the stratosphere, in those early days spoken of reverently as "the heavens" and firmly believed to be peopled with angels

I was about to add "care for ballooning," when, to my astonishment, this lovely girl gave a modest cry.

"Oh, Sir! But this is so sudden!" she gasped, and closed her eyes in a deep swoon.

Alas, when she came to, later, I was gone. From that day to this I have never seen that lovely girl again.

Somehow, this catastrophe, coming on top of my other troubles, put aeronautics right out of my head, and although to-day I sometimes feel the old "call of the air," I have never yet spent Christmas as I would like to do—namely, up in a balloon, "far from the madding crowd."

THE END.

"Pardon Me!"

"Pardon Me!"

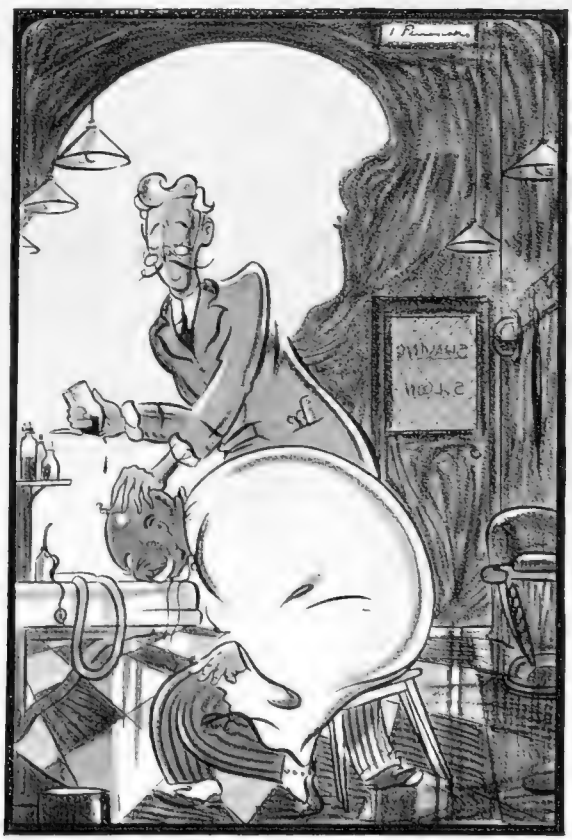
C. PRESCOTT.

"Pardon Me!"

"Pardon Me!"

"Pardon Me!"

"Pardon Me!"



"Pardon Me!"

"Pardon Me!"

("Pardon Me" . . . EDITOR)

Tradesmen, in fact, seemed to have a fascination for him, and the most fascinating of all was the apothecary, a mild-faced old man, who sat in a small, dark shop

For Services to Trade

Though hawking, hunting, tilting, valour die,
Commerce preserved the aristocracy

By Jan Struther

Illustrated by Savory

SIR BORILASE, as was the custom in those days, had three sons. The first two were well-grown, conventional youths, who took to the fashionable pursuits of the time, such as hawking, hunting and archery, like ducks to the water, drank heavily, swore lustily, acquitted themselves well in the tiltyard, rode out into the world to win their spurs, killed a dragon or so apiece, were duly knighted, and eventually married well into the neighbouring county families.

But the third son, like so many third sons, was far from satisfactory. Small and weakly from birth, he showed neither aptitude nor inclination for any of the pastimes at which his brothers excelled, but preferred to hang about the Castle gates watching the low company who rode or tramped along the highway—packmen and chapmen and higglers and merchants of all kinds. And when he was older he would even slip out of the gates and go down to the town, where he would make friends with the shopkeepers and wander about among the stalls and booths in the market-place. Tradesmen, in fact, seemed to have a fascination for him; and the most fascinating of all was the apothecary, a mild-faced old man who sat in a small, dark shop mixing strange concoctions out of herbs and other less savoury ingredients.

"Has it ever occurred to you," Tertius asked him one day, "that you would do a better trade if you tidied up your shop and made it more attractive to look at?"

"No," said the apothecary, blinking gently, "it hasn't. Perhaps you're right. But I don't think so. Those who want potions will come and buy them; those who don't, won't. Surely people couldn't be such fools as to walk in and buy something they didn't need just because they liked the look of the shop?"

"I am not sure," said Tertius, shrewdly, "but I rather think they might. Try it and see."

So the apothecary painted his shop bright blue, outside and in, and put a big bowl of flowers in the window; and, sure enough, his trade increased by twenty-five per cent. in a week. And while his opinion of human nature dropped considerably, his respect for Tertius's intelligence went up.

One day Sir Borilase sent for Tertius and said: "My son, it is high time that you went out into the world and won your spurs."

"I don't want any spurs," said Tertius.

"Don't be wilfully dense," snapped Sir Borilase, whose gout was playing hob with his temper. "You know quite well what the expression means—to qualify for a knighthood."

"But I don't want to be a knight," said Tertius blasphemously.

"Nonsense," said Sir Borilase. "You might just as well say that you don't want to be grown-up, or forty, or dead. Being a knight is the natural destiny of a young man in your position. And to become one, as you know, you must have a few deeds of derring-do to your credit."

"But, Father," said Tertius, "I have never been interested in fighting, and I have little strength and no skill at it at all. What will happen is that I shall be instantly killed. I am not

[*Continued overleaf*

And there, sure enough, was the dragon lying dead outside, and Tertius sitting among the whitened bones of his predecessors, nonchalantly reading a book

Photo by Howard & Joan Coster

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royds

Continued from page 64

saying this from cowardice, but from common sense. Do you want to see me brought home to you as dead as a door-nail ? "

" Better dead than dishonoured," answered Sir Borilase sternly. " If you have chosen to neglect your lessons in swordsmanship, that is—and probably will be—your funeral. A knight you must become, or perish in the attempt. There is no other career open to a gentleman's son."

So Tertius shrugged his shoulders philosophically, and three days later he set out. But the night before he left he paid a secret visit to the apothecary.

" Has it ever occurred to you," he said, " that you would do a better trade if your goods became known throughout the country, instead of to a handful of people in Hencherstown ? "

" Well," said the apothecary, blinking gently, " it *hadn't* . . ."

. . . . . .

TERTIUS rode along for many days without finding a single opportunity for derring-do. But one evening he came to a small town whose inhabitants were all gathered together in the market-place, wringing their hands and moaning.

" Who will rid us of this terrible dragon ? " they moaned. " He is trampling down all our crops and devouring all our cattle, and nobody is able to kill him."

" Allow me," said Tertius. " I think this is where *I* come in."

The townsfolk looked at him dubiously.

" Twenty strong knights have left their bones in front of the dragon's cave," said the Mayor. " How should a dwaibly youth like you succeed ? "

" Leave it to me," said Tertius grandly. " Where is the cave ? "

" Under that hill," answered the Mayor; " and every day at sunrise the dragon comes out to hunt for his breakfast."

" Assemble there at one hour after sunrise to-morrow," said Tertius, " and you will find myself and the dragon—the former alive and the latter dead."

" God send it is not the other way about," said the Mayor gloomily.

So the next morning all the townsfolk trooped along to the cave in mingled hope and fear; and there, sure enough, was the dragon lying dead outside, and Tertius sitting among the whitened bones of his predecessors, nonchalantly reading a book. There were no signs of bloodshed, but the dragon's face was set in an expression of agony, indignation, and surprise.

" Brave deliverer ! " cried the Mayor, falling on his knees before Tertius. " Excellent youth ! Inimitable warrior ! What reward can we give you for ridding our neighbourhood of this monster ? "

" I 'm not asking you to *give* me anything," said Tertius, pleasantly, " but perhaps you would care to place an order with me for a few dozen bottles of NOXO ? "

" What," asked the Mayor, " is NOXO ? "

" It is a concoction invented and prepared by my friend Bartholomew Pippett, of the Market Square, Hencherstown. It is guaranteed to rid your homes of all noxious pests, who find it both irresistible and fatal. A weak solution of it is sufficient to kill flies, wasps, and mosquitoes ; a stronger dose will account for mice and rats ; full strength, as you see, it will even deal with dragons. Can any householder afford to be without it ? "

" Definitely not," replied the Mayor, impressed ; amd he gave Tertius an order for twenty bottles forthwith, to use in the Town Hall, which was over-run with blackbeetles. The crowd eagerly followed suit, and in half-an-hour Tertius had taken orders for over a hundred gallons of the stuff and had sent a mounted messenger back to Hencherstown to break the glad news to the apothecary.

That was Tertius's first experiment in the hitherto unknown art of travelling salesmanship. There is not space here to recount in full his other adventures. How, for instance, he came to a tall, slippery tower in the middle of a forest, with one small window right at the top, at which he saw the face of a beautiful maiden who had (she told him between sobs) been left there to starve by a wicked uncle ; and how, with the aid of a bent sapling, he propelled up into her hands a bottle of CRINKO, Bartholomew Pippett's wonderful scalp-lotion, which made the lady's hair grow at such an amazing rate that by the next morning she was able to fasten the end to the bed-post and slide down the rest of it to the ground, where Tertius severed the thick golden rope, with his sword and set her free ; and how she, having a sweetheart of her own and being rather fearful lest Tertius should claim her hand in marriage as a reward, was so relieved when he didn't that she straightway ordered a dozen bottles of CRINKO for her own future use, and promised to recommend it to all her girl friends into the bargain.

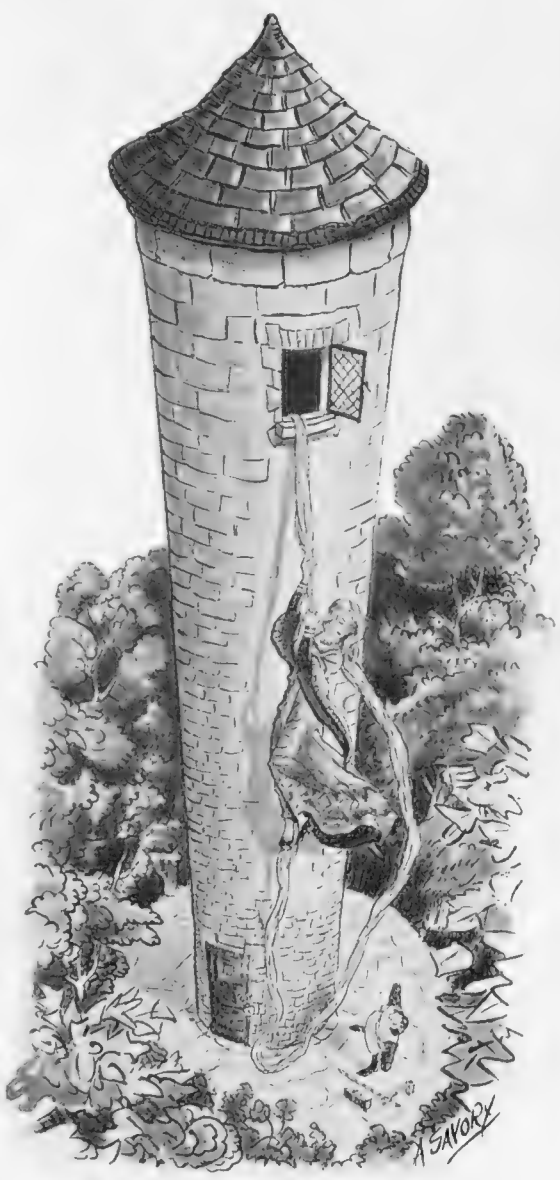
Nor can I tell in detail how he restored to health the daughter of a powerful baron—a pallid young woman who had been in a decline for years—by giving her a course of VIGGO, the marvellous herbal tonic which Bartholomew Pippett had specially designed for the cure of anæmia, debility, and listlessness ; and how the wretched girl, while quickly regaining her health and spirits, conceived at the same time a most inconvenient passion for Tertius himself, so that he had the greatest difficulty in escaping from her father's house with an order for a year's supply of VIGGO instead of an unwanted wife. (It occurred to him afterwards that the apothecary must have confused the labels and that the bottle had really contained a love-potion instead : but he kept this suspicion to himself.)

In course of time—since he had arranged with the apothecary that he himself should pocket a groat for every crown's worth of goods that he sold—he amassed a tidy sum of money. Moreover, his fame spread throughout the countryside. Other apothecaries offered him larger commissions if he would travel in *their* products ; and, while loyally refusing to do so, he was careful to mention these tempting offers to Bartholomew Pippett—who hastily raised the groat to sixpence.

Eventually the news of this enterprising young man reached the ears of the King himself, who immediately sent for Tertius and made him a knight. " for Services Rendered to Trade." And when at length he returned home, Sir Borilase hobbled towards him with open arms and said, " My son, I have grossly misjudged you. What can I give you to show my repentance ? "

" Don't mention it, Father," said Sir Tertius magnanimously. " I am a rich man now and lack for nothing. But I perceive that you are, as usual, crippled with your old affliction. It would give me much pleasure if you would accept a free sample of SALZO, the proven remedy for gout, rheumatism, and all similar complaints. . . ."

THE END.



. . . which made the lady's hair grow at such an amazing rate that by the next morning she was able to fasten the end to the bed-post and slide down the rest of it to the ground

BY TONY WYSARD

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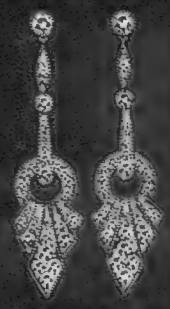

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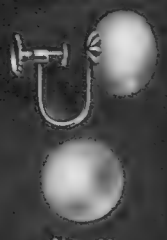

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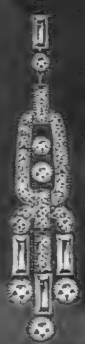

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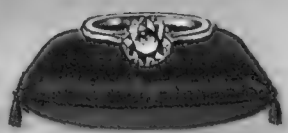

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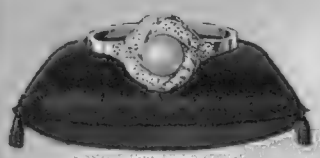

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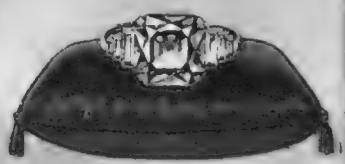

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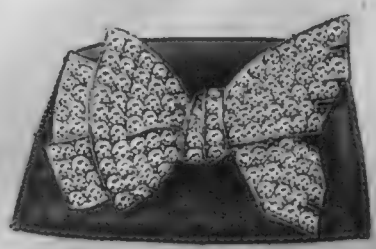

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One Steyne less Night (Continued from page 15)

where she has been. You can't beat Evans; he knows all the answers. "I guess," he mutters, "where she 's been." So, what with Lady Millicent tossing and Lord Johnson turning, and Evans guessing, and Earl Steyne lying snoring among the naked bottles and empty cabaret girls, the night passes smoothly, and a new reel—I mean a new day—is born.

The guests assembled at breakfast are wearing the peculiar costume which tradition ordains for a British boar-hunt—knee-breeches and black velvet hunting-caps. They hurry over their grape-fruit, waffles, and postum, and jump into coaches, eager to be off to the meet. Duke Bedding deals out the spears, and a quartet of viscounts sing a hunting song in perfect harmony.

LADY Millicent comes from the house, and, avoiding Earl Steyne's odious caress, jumps lightly on to her savage mare, which has a Mexican saddle and, apparently, no pupils to its eyes.

"Where shall we start the hunt?" asks Duke Bedding—and it is now that Evans shows himself in his true colours. "I happen to know, Duke," he says, "where there 's a particularly crashing boar, and, if you 'll forgive the liberty, I 'll take you there." Whereupon he unleashes the boar-hounds and heads straight for the summer-house! The whole hunt streams after him, laughing gaily. Only Lady Millicent does not laugh, for she realises that, unless she can do something, Lord Johnson will get what is coming to him—and coming to him in coaches!

And now—how 's the story going to end? My original idea was to have the hounds chase Lord Johnson out of the summer-house, and corner him in the forest; then, just as Earl Steyne and Evans think he is done for, the hounds all sit up and beg, having recognised Lord Johnson as the kind stranger who 'd taken thorns out of all their feet years before—in which case, Earl Steyne, in a fit of baffled rage, could throw a spear at Lord Johnson, miss him, and hit Evans, shaving off his twisted lip, unwalling his eye, clipping his fringe, and revealing him as a detective who's come to arrest Earl Steyne for trafficking in women and girls at Harrogate.

But, somehow or other, that 's far too like British life as we know it to-day to satisfy Hollywood, so I've decided to leave the synopsis unfinished, and ask the film company to think up an ending of their own, promising them that you and I will do our best to make British life exactly like anything they think of, so that the Middle West will be pleased, a high standard of accuracy will be achieved, and everyone will be happy!

THE END

Cat and Mouse (Continued from page 34)

"You see? We 're where we started. It couldn't be done. No one in their senses would have risked that climb." He tapped the note-book in front of him. "There 's not a man living could have climbed up to that window." He allowed himself the relaxation of a smile. "Only a cat."

A SUDDEN scream rent the air. A woman's scream. "A cat! Oh, God! A *cat!*"

They turned, the whole company, to find the woman pointing hysterically to her husband, a little man in a fur suit, who was backing away from her, waving his hands in front of him, as if to beat down her accusing finger while he spat and hissed at her. She turned to the Inspector.

"Don't you *see*, you fool? A cat!"

The two policemen closed on the man simultaneously, but he tripped them and again stood at bay. Not trying to escape. But standing there. His back arched. His teeth bared. The hair on his head erect. Facing them. Again the two constables closed with him, getting the hand-cuffs on him this time, but falling to the floor with him in the struggle; upsetting, as they did so, the saucer of milk. A moment longer they fought, the three of them, while the man between them bit and scratched. Then he screamed. One high, long scream. A scream of rage and triumph. And it was as if, in that scream, all fight, and with it his sanity, left him. The next moment, grovelling, waddling, his handcuffed hands beating the floor in front of him like two supplicating paws, he was down on his knees before the upset saucer. His face was thrust into the milk. He was lapping avidly. And purring, purring . . .

THE END.

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All-Day Widows (Continued from page 50)

But Luella had letters from Maurice Praysing. Irene had letters from Brown. Clair had letters from Irene Praysing. Maurice had letters from Luella Brown. Such foolish letters!

As a matter of fact, they had all four destroyed them, but none of them knew this.

THE two husbands were going to Canada together for three months on business. They were succeeding in their united enterprise. The little hat shop run by the two wives was an almost unqualified success. The one woman had lost none of her old art. The other had regained most of her old customers.

Very bored, the two men still met each other's wives clandestinely. There had never been a great deal in it, but now there was nothing at all—no glamour, no allure; but they were nervous, too nervous to let go. Their wives were very busy, smart, happy and vivacious these days. Each man was happy with his own wife, happier than they had been since the first six months of marriage, if the truth were only known. They were companionable, alive mentally, they made few demands, and were always cheerfully occupied; and very smart. They liked squiring smart women. All men do.

In the little Paradise of four was always the feeling of insecurity, of building good business on shifting sand. Clair Brown thought Irene might confess to outworn, discarded folly, either to her husband or to his own wife. Maurice Praysing was positive that one day Luella would suffer a sharp emotional urge to unburden herself—either to her husband or her business partner, Irene.

It wasn't that there had been much in it—a few thousand kisses, little taxi-rides, odd meals, odder meetings, a lot of rot talked, hot thoughts, a lot of telephoning, a heap of perfectly insane nicknames—that was about all it amounted to, really. They said everything and did nothing. Their sins were mental. Women totted up mental sins to a ghastly total! That was where men and women were so different.

THEY all had a farewell dinner together the night before the two men sailed for Canada. It was a little like the dinner at which they had all met two years previously; and it preceded the first real separation from their wives that they had ever known.

They were busy and did not dress. Their wives were to meet them, coming straight on from their hat shop. They were moving to larger premises in a better neighbourhood, and they telephoned that they would be a little late.

But it was obvious from the first moment of their meeting that their wives had been crying, and were still labouring under some violent emotion! What, in Heaven's name, had happened? Had they, on the eve of an enlarged successful business venture, been fools enough to confess to each other—or were they comtemplating confession when they arrived home? Their relationship to each other seemed as vivid and cordial as it had always been; and they were affable and affectionate to their husbands. What obscure emotional impulses moved and secretly controlled them? Were they going to bust things irretrievably for a moment of self-relief, a vagrant impulse to confess? Impossible to find out, or circumvent while they were all together! The two husbands were on tenterhooks. It was a miserable, frightening, nerve-wracking evening, filled with false jollity and geniality.

At last the miserable, constrained, unreal evening drew to a close and each man drove home with his unexploded bomb.

LUELLA BROWN made Clair a stiff whisky and soda. She handed him a minute paste sandwich in exquisitely-manicured fingers; and sat down at his feet, an alert, précieuse, clever little mondaine.

"Clair," she said gently, "I 've something to say to you. It 's Irene," she said calmly, judicially. "She 's worried to death, poor lamb! I 've never seen anyone in such a state of nerves!"

"What 's worrying Irene?"

"She 's afraid you 'll get tight or confidential with Maurice when you 're away together and tell him about you and her. She 's been frightened of it for nearly two years and bottling it up—but to-night, it just all burst out. I told her men weren't like that. But she was quite frantic. I had to send out for brandy. I never thought I 'd get her straightened up for the restaurant. You must have seen there was something up, Clair?"

"Oh, I did."

"I thought you might."

"Luella! Irene doesn't mean a thing to me now! Do you believe me?"

"Of course!" said Luella, gently, almost negligently. "It was quite inevitable that, with her temperament, and stuck in that silly little flat day after day with nothing in the world to do, she 'd get into trouble."

"She told you?"

"She was so frightened you 'd squeak," said Luella apologetically; "otherwise, wild horses wouldn't have dragged it from her. You know, she 's really fond of funny old Maurice in her own way!"

"And you, Lu?"

"My dear—of course I understand. I was an all-day widow too."

"Yes, but you wouldn't . . ."

"You never know," said Luella.

"Luella, you 're marvellous! You make me so ashamed! It was so silly, really."

"Of course," said Luella, charmingly, reassuringly; "and I can tell Irene to-morrow I have your oath you 'll never split to Maurice?"

"Of course! My dear—men don't."

Luella heaved a deep, deep sigh of relief. Her eyelids closed for a minute over her eyes.

"Oh, darling," she said, "when you come back, just cut it all out, will you?"

"Of course!"

"No; I mean for the sake of the business. If we 're going to make a go of this, Irene must have no distractions. We must concentrate."

Now Luella herself had been so worried lest, in an unguarded moment Clair, should confide in Maurice. One never knew with men! They were so unreliable. Irene's little outburst had made it so easy. Now everything was quite, quite safe. Lovely!

"Irene 's a genius, but she must concentrate more and not be silly and running off at a tangent—she 's not an all-day widow now."

When men got together you never knew what would happen.

It would have been too ghastly if what she had always been afraid of happened and Clair opened up to Maurice, felt he must confess. Now Maurice wouldn't give him an opening or a chance. As for herself and Irene—well, if anything, it had brought them closer together. Women were different. It was men you could never be sure of! However, she 'd made sure now.

IRENE turned on the bath for her husband; then, in a deep-orange dressing-gown, looking gipsy-like and perfectly ravishing, she came and sat on the edge of the bath and lazily soaped his back, which he would have loved but for his secret disquiet.

"Luella told me all about you and her to-day," she said, omitting to add that she had broken bounds emotionally first. "I don't blame her . . . nor you."

"My God!" said Maurice, white to the lips.

"She had to," said Irene gently. "She was so scared stiff you 'd talk to Clair while you were away! Get it off your chest."

"Men don't do those things."

"Of course not!" said Irene, who had been in a panic for weeks, believing they did. "Maurice, she wants you to give her your solemn word of honour you 'll never, never breathe a word, and you 'll shut Clair up if ever he says the teeniest thing . . ."

"Why should he say the teeniest thing!"

"That 's what I said to Luella; but she was in a frenzy. She adores Clair, you know. It was just that she was bored and hadn't anything to do when she first met you."

"There was nothing in it."

"Of course not. But don't you go upsetting Luella's young mind when you come back all attractive and sunburnt. She 's got to put her back into this show of ours."

"I tell you there wasn't a darn thing in it—not really, dear."

Irene was really fond of her husband. She stooped and kissed him. "I know," she said. "But boys will be boys and girls will be girls."

"Not you!" said Maurice.

"You never know," said Irene. "We 'll never speak of this again as long as we live . . . we 've got something more amusing to talk about, thank God, these days!" She drew a deep, deep breath.

It would have been too devastating if Clair had started to talk to Maurice—now Maurice would never, never know about Clair and herself. It didn't matter Luella knowing. Women saw these things so differently. They understood how boring being a woman could be. They made allowances. Let a man try being alone all day with nothing to do!

THE END.

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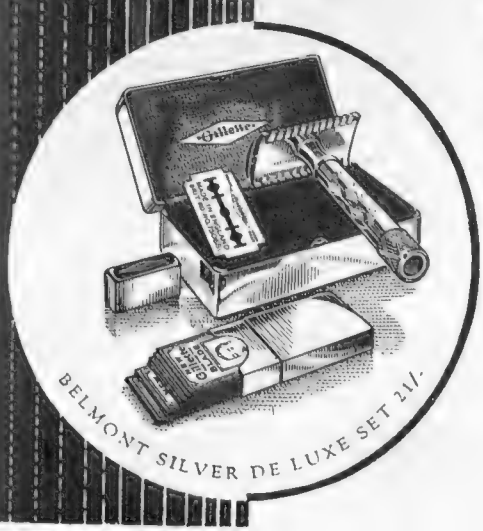

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Midnight Express (Cont. from page 27)

much more unreal than that mad, lovely adventure.

By the time we had finished our picnic meal, only the morning star was left.

She gave a little, happy sigh. "You 're nice," she said. "But you must go before the sun is up."

"No," I protested.

She smiled. "Yes. Part of the art of living is knowing when to ring down the curtain on what has been lovely. And so few people know."

She moved away from me and began clearing away the remains of our meal. I remained at the window, staring out at the sea and that relentlessly mounting dawn. I did not want to go. I wanted to draw the curtains against the invading dawn. I wanted the adventure of the midnight express to culminate in a blinding splendour. Yet, at the back of all this, something in me insisted that she was right . . . and might there not be other midnights, other dawns?

I asked her this in the boat as we sped back up the coast, whilst the line of light crimsoned sea and sky.

She smiled and said, "How young you are! Don't you know that one should never try to repeat any lovely experience?"

"Then am I never to see you again?" I asked despairingly.

"Not by arrangement," she said.

"But if we leave it to chance——"

She did not answer, and we did not speak again until the boat was throbbing at the bottom of the steps of the jetty, with the little railway station above.

Then she said, "There 's a train in about half an hour. I won't come and see you off. You can sleep in the train—and, over your lunch-time cocktail when you get back to town, drink to the memory of a mad midnight adventure that finished with the dawn."

"There 's nothing to stop me leaping aboard the midnight express any night and coming to you again."

"You would make a terrible mistake if you did that," she answered, "and I should be very sad. It would spoil everything. Promise that you won't."

I promised. There was nothing else for it. I stepped out of the boat and ran up the steps. From the top of the jetty I turned to wave to her, but the little boat was already shooting away, and she didn't look back . . . the adventure was over.

I never saw her again, though the desire to do so burned in me intolerably for weeks after. Midnight after midnight I would think of the express steaming out of Paddington, hurtling through the night; and I would think, "I have only to go aboard that train . . . to find at the other side of midnight a boat moored to a jetty, and a white cottage like a witch's house, and a girl about whom I know nothing save her name, a girl with eyes like the morning star . . . all this is only a few hours away, and a train leaves every midnight." On several occasions I actually went again to see my Cornish friends off by that train, but I never went aboard. I had promised . . . besides, I have wisdom enough to know that the lovely adventure which comes as a gift of chance can never happen twice, and never by arrangement.

But, though I kept my promise, and though I had this wisdom, I nevertheless did a foolish thing. Some friends of mine were discussing with me as to where they should spend their summer holidays without going abroad; somewhere quiet, they said, a fishing village, or something like that. I told them of this village I had seen by starlight and dawn-light. A few weeks later they wrote me from there. "We 've taken a furnished cottage for the summer," they wrote me, "one of a row of coastguards' cottages, and just to show what a small world it is, the people next door know you—at least she does. Joyce Haynes. She says she met you once—at some champagne-party or something. She said she thought you 'd remember. They 're an awfully nice couple, though *he 's* not as interesting as she is—the big business man type, you know. He only comes out at week-ends—gets here about lunch-time on Saturdays and goes back on Mondays——"

It was only then that I remembered that that day whose dawn we had kept together was not just a dateless and timeless and nameless day snatched from eternity, but had an official place in the calendar. It was a Saturday.

I wrote to my friends: "Tell Mrs. Haynes that I remember very well that champagne-party at which we met, and give her my kind regards."

A few days later they wrote again, sending a packet which, they said, Mrs. Haynes had asked them to forward to me from her—"as a souvenir of your meeting with her."

The souvenir was a champagne cork and a few faded Parma violets.

THE END.

Wedding Manners (Cont. from page 31)

BOBBY: Darling, it 's too bogus. I was supposed to be an usher, and I arrived literally with the bride. You seem to have done quite well for yourselves, don't you? There are some relations back there making an awful scene because there is no room for them.

MOLLY: Now *I* must pay attention to the service.

OLIVIA (*with a meaning look*): Yes, I expect you must. (*Whispering to Molly*) Did he propose?

MOLLY: Well, not exactly—oh, how embarrassing!—does one have to say all those things out loud?

OLIVIA: No, you can be married in a hat if you don't like all this; it 's awfully romantic, but one gets more presents this way, I believe.

MOLLY: Yes, it 's quite an idea. Hats suit me rather well on the whole.

OLIVIA (*with a sigh of relief*): Thank goodness they 've gone to sign the register! Now we can talk again. Bobby, darling, do tell me how you came to be an usher to these people. I mean, they are absolute lice, aren't they?

BOBBY (*sourly*): Norah Popkin is Mummy's first cousin.

OLIVIA: Sweetheart, I *am* sorry! How bogus of me. I must say the bridegroom does look like King Kong, though, doesn't he? She 's quite lovely, of course. How could she want to marry him?

BOBBY: Very sensible girl. After all, he 's a millionaire.

OLIVIA: Still, King Kong——

MOLLY: Here they come. They 've been lovely and quick, haven't they? I think she 's worse without her veil, don't you? And why do they look so disgustingly pleased with themselves, I wonder?

OLIVIA: Now, which is the best way out?

BOBBY: When I arrived I particularly noticed three photographers outside that little door.

OLIVIA: Splendid! Come on, quickly, before the rush . . . well, I must say I don't see any photographers at all. The street is quite empty. Bobby—where 's that little cad gone? I *know* he did it for a practical joke.

MOLLY: Never mind; if we 're quick we can still catch one at the front . . .

OLIVIA: Gracious! I haven't run like that in years. I say, that man didn't *take* us running, did he?

MOLLY: Look out, darling—there 's one!

OLIVIA: Where?

MOLLY: There. That 's all right, he 's taken us. Oh, bother, he 's not going to ask our names—how awfully souring! Now it probably won't get published at all.

OLIVIA: I expect he knows who we are all right. Now, do we want to go to the reception?

MOLLY: We might as well, don't you think? I awfully badly want to tell you about last night, and there 's no place like a wedding reception for a long, cosy talk, is there?

MOLLY } OLIVIA } (*in unison*): TAXI!

AT THE RECEPTION.

OLIVIA: Now I vote we just take one look at the jewels and then settle ourselves on that sofa with two lovely glasses of champagne.

MOLLY: Yes, come on. Oh, how do you do, Lady Norah? What a beautiful wedding! You must be pleased it all went off so well. Gladys looked sweet, didn't she? Where is she, by the way? I 'm longing to congratulate her.

OLIVIA: That 's grand. Now we 'll go this way, thus avoiding King and Queen Kong and get at the jewels before anybody else.

MOLLY: My dear, aren't they lousy? All antique, too. Nothing from Cartier—not so much as one clip.

OLIVIA: Awfully bad stones as well. Brazilian, I should think! Well, *I* wouldn't marry King Kong for one mangy necklace and a teeny pair of earrings, I must say.

MOLLY: And they 've had to put in lots of things that aren't really jewels at all, to fill up the case. That 's always a bad sign.

OLIVIA: As for the other presents, they seem to have got nothing but waste-paper-baskets and trays. Do let 's go to the bar.

MOLLY: Bring your glass over here, darling. I *must* tell you——

OLIVIA: No, Bobby, go away. We 're not on speaking terms with you, for one thing, and I want to hear Molly's news most particularly. Now, darling, what was it *exactly* that he said?

THE END.

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The Hoofer *and the* Lady (Continued from page 54)

Nobody else wanted to, and she was not allowed to, of course, but her aunt, being kind to her in public, smiled and told the dear, funny child that she should come again next week, if she really liked it so much.

"Next week, hell!" thought Alicia, who had been forced, in self-defence, to cultivate a secret vocabulary as well as a secret philosophy of life, "I 'm coming to-morrow night."

She did, telling the aunt that she was going to the pictures with a respectable female companion. Even Alicia did not quite dare to go to the Pallorpheum by herself, and sit surrounded by large, inquisitive men with cigars, so she took Dorothy van den Lyn with her, and told her to shut up, and just eat the chocolates and not interrupt, because she, Alicia, wanted to watch someone.

Dorothy, who was terrified of the large, silent Alicia, did as she was told. Alicia had secured two front-row stalls, and this time the young man smiled at her three times. He recognised her!

"Alicia," said Dorothy, daring much in respectability's name, "he smiled at you. Do you know him?"

"Not yet," said Alicia.

"There," said Dorothy, looking over her shoulder at the fifth row of the stalls, "is Colonel Trumpet."

"Silly old thing," said Alicia. "Now do shut up, Dolly, because it 's his turn again in half an hour, and I want to think about him in between."

They sat through to the end of the show, and left under some comments from the programme-sellers. Someone was heard to observe that they hoped them two had had their money's worth. Dorothy writhed with shame, and told Alicia that she had sat through it once but would not do it again.

"Yes, you will," said Alicia. "I 'm coming again to-morrow night, and so are you."

And she did, and Dorothy did, and so did Colonel Trumpet.

This went on until the end of the week. The love-maddened Alicia (to borrow a fragrant and useful head-line from the American Press) also ventured there during the afternoon by herself, but in the evenings she always took Dorothy, and the aunt worried herself black in the face, declining the most luscious invitations for Alicia, and pestering her with questions about her evening excursions.

"I 've told you," said Alicia patiently. "I go to the movies."

"It isn't natural," said the aunt, "to go three times a week. I tell you I won't have it, Alicia. I am allowing you a certain amount of licence, because I think you will very soon have a piece of news for me, won't you?"

"I shouldn't think so," said Alicia.

". . . but at the end of the week you must stop this nonsense. I can't think what 's come over you."

And she went upstairs to coo to Colonel Trumpet over the telephone, and assure him girls were often a little nervous at Alicia's age. It would wear off, she was sure. Girls often took these odd fancies. Alicia was spending her evenings at the cinema.

The Colonel, who was by now as well known to the attendants at the Pallorpheum as were Alicia and Dorothy, did not give Alicia away.

When the end of the week came, and Alicia realised with a shock that next week the programme was changed and that she would see her dear love no more, she became desperate and did a most imprudent thing.

She wrote a shy, cold little note burning with secret love, and entrusted it (she sent it by the wretched Dorothy, who was, by now, on the edge of collapse and fathoms deep in frightful lies) to the stage-doorkeeper.

"For Mr. Varconi, Miss?" said the stage-doorkeeper, giving Dorothy a keen, respectful look which went to her poor little heart. So, just so, did Batson, their very own butler, look at her when she told him to tell young men on the telephone that she was out when she was in. Very remiss, but then Batson was one of those butlers who had dandled all the younger members of the family.

"Please," faltered Dorothy.

"I 'll see he gets it, Miss," said the stage-doorkeeper, looking more than ever like Batson.

So it happened, on that December evening, when all maytrees in the London parks were silhouetted like little black, lace umbrellas against the starry sky of winter, Joe Dunks (that was Mr. Varconi's real name) came out of the stage door to find a big car waiting for him, and sitting in it a big, snow-pale, frightened young lady.

He was very tired after the show. It was his first job in London, and he had not been making big money for so long that he had got in with a hard-drinking crowd which went along to parties after the show; and he liked to go home peacefully to bed. He thought this young lady was a nuisance, but he was used to fobbing off ritzy dames in Chicago and on Broadway who sometimes gave him the come-hither, and he had reduced his technique to an art. But, oh! how he wished he was peacefully in bed.

He came up to the car, and put his head in at the window.

The snow maiden inside gave a huge start.

"Howdy?" said Mr. Dunks. "You Miss Paget? I think it 's swell of you to want to meet me. Real friendly. Not like most of the English. Freeze you a mile off. You interested in our show?"

"I . . . I think it 's lovely," said Miss Paget faintly. "Are . . . are the steps difficult to learn?"

"Sure. But not to me and the girls and other hoofers. We 're used to it, see. Easy as falling off a box, after the years we been at it."

"I . . . I was wondering," she said diffidently (for Mr. Dunks, at close quarters, was a little perfumed and a little blue-chinned and a little too American, bless his heart), "I was wondering if you would care for a lift home?"

"Sure thing. Mighty nice of you," said Mr. Dunks, with real gratitude, and he hopped into the car, and Alicia told the chauffeur to drive through the Park to South Kensington, whence Mr. Dunks assured her he could get home.

"Are . . . are your partners . . . have they gone home too?"

"Gone to supper with a coupla boy friends," said he, briefly.

When once they were in the Park, driving rather slowly along its deserted avenues under the bare, black trees, glamour returned to Mr. Dunks. Poor Alicia, still wondering painfully why she had done anything so silly, stole a look at him, and decided he was, after all, very nice.

"You must think me very curious . . . very unconventional," she said impulsively, "asking you to meet me like this. But I did so admire your dancing, and I wondered what it would be like to meet . . . ."

You cannot say to a man "I fell in love with your smile."

"Oh, sure. Sure. I think you 're swell," said Mr. Dunks, who was nearly asleep. "You 're a great kid."

And he put out his hand, and easily patted Alicia's.

Alicia sat very still. She had not thought that Mr. Dunks (whom she still thought of, and always would, as Mr. Varconi) would pat her hand. She had once thought that perhaps he might try to kiss her, but had immediately closed her mind sternly to the thought. And she had not thought what he would be like to talk to, nor what she would say to him when she met him. In fact, she behaved like most of us do when in love; she never thought of her beloved as a human being at all, but only as an image upon which to drape dreams.

Mr. Dunks withdrew his hand.

"Guess you go to a lotta ritzy parties?" he said, politely making conversation.

"Oh, yes—lots. There always are a lot at Christmas, you know. I think Christmas is such a nice time, don't you?" Which showed just how young Alicia was. The shadow of bulging stockings seemed to fill the car.

"Sure," said Mr. Dunks.

"But you don't have a proper Christmas in America, do you? I mean, you have it at the New Year, don't you?"

"Sure—Thanksgiving."

Poor Mr. Dunks was nearly asleep, but just for a second, as Alicia's clear young voice solemnly announced that Christmas was such a nice time, he opened his blue eyes quite wide and looked at her. He never in his life had seen anyone so fresh, so innocent, so earnest. He felt he must do something about it at once, and not what most men would have done, either. He knew just what was the matter with her, and why.

He sat upright, and put his hand over hers again. For the second time, Alicia sat very still.

"Sister," he said ["I like that," thought Alicia, with a little surprised, pleased feeling] "will you do something to please me?"

Alicia wanted to reply "Sure I will," but curbed herself and replied correctly, "Of course."

"Well, will you just tell your shuvver to take you home? Right now. Because I 'm not so sleepy I might not say something I 'd be sorry for, if you don't. You 're a swell kid. Now you go right off home, will you? and tuck yourself into

(Continued on page vi)

Smart-Break House (Cont. from page 17)

"You will have your little joke," she said, and then she opened a red-and-gold cabinet and brought out a small wart-hog wearing a velvet coat. "There," she said proudly, "that ought to do the trick, eh?"

"What trick?" I enquired feebly. The dear Duchess thought this a most exquisite joke, for she giggled for quite a long time. Then she handed me a typewritten sheet, which began with the words, "I venture to prophesy that Waldo, the Duchess of Chesilden's pet wart-hog, will put a number of Mayfair noses out of joint this season."

"It may help you with your stuff," she explained. I felt that the time had come for me to be firm. "Your Grace," I said, drawing myself up, "I am not connected with the Press."

"And whatever you do you mustn't mention Waldo's diamond collar," replied the Duchess.

"I wouldn't dream of mentioning Waldo's diamond collar," I said haughtily.

"Good," she replied, her face falling. Then she added, more hopefully: "Nor his embroidered waistcoat. I absolutely forbid you to mention that, unless, of course, you think it has a special news-value."

"Madam," I said firmly, "it has no news-value at all." The Duchess burst into tears and went in search of a drink.

. . . . . .

Dinner was a most confusing meal. I sat between Lavinia Rustington, the film-star, and Myrtle D'Este. They began to talk to me simultaneously, stopped, glared at each other, and began again, rather louder.

"My new contract," shouted Lavinia, "is for thirty grand a week for three years, beginning——" but the rest was lost in Miss D'Este's steady bawl in my other ear—"pale blue stiffened muslin, hand-painted with a flowery design, which unexpectedly reveals itself to be my monogram many times repeated."

Suddenly the two lovely ladies paused for breath, and from the other side of the table came the aristocratic, refined voice of the young Marquis of Ritz, descendant of a hundred heroes of chivalry. "G.P.I.'s Preferred closed at six-and-eight," he was saying dreamily. "Susquehanna B's closed at 24; Synthetic Bonemeal at four-and-nine; Armenian Gold Bonds went to par." The whole table was hushed in a reverent silence. The Duchess was working out a sum with a fountain-pen on the table-cloth, and there was hardly a guest who was not jotting a note down somewhere. The butler was scribbling feverishly on the shirt-front of one of the footmen, and another footman was standing in a corner, trying unobtrusively to cut his throat with a fish-knife.

"Standard Lamp-black of Illinois," went on the gentle croon, "six dollars fifty; and I do not recommend anyone to touch Corrosive Fluids in the meantime."

His voice died away and there was a hush, broken at last by Mr. Jebusa Jilk, who looked me squarely in the eye and said: "And I finished the last seven holes in four, four, four, four, four, four, four."

"I haven't signed yet, of course," said Lavinia hastily, "because Metro-Goldwyn want me——"

"The new bridge-cards," said Miss D'Este, "are edged with stockinette to avoid noise and thus increase mental concentration."

"Thirty-nine," called out Mrs. O'Halloran from the other end of the table. "It really is a shame the way ye spalpeens of young gossoons are after talking about me age, and me a poor old woman that does be walking the world like the mists in Connemara, and they rolling up the glens and keening and they rolling down again."

"Vulgarity," said Veronica Tight snappily, "is the manners of other people."

"Damn!" said her husband crossly. Marilyn Mogg turned on him like a flash.

"You wish you had said that one?" she said. "Never mind, Oswald, you will."

"At least I haven't got the courage," he began sulkily, and his wife and Miss Mogg shrieked simultaneously, "of the convictions of other people." Mr. Tight moodily drank a glass of barley-water.

Miss Mogg leant across the table and shouted to me: "Now that I have broken the motor-scooter record across the Sahara, I am looking for other fields to conquer full stop new paragraph. My plans are already far advanced for pushing a stuffed olive with a cherry-stick, backwards, up Popocatapetl full stop. The preliminary announcements

(Continued on page vi)

Creation and the Robot

WE ARE living in an age of strange anomalies. It is so progressive that it has apparently over-run itself. Its speed is so excessive that people fly from place to place in record time, and don't know what the hell to do with themselves when they get there. Scientifically it is the age of marvellous discoveries; artistically it is the age of fresh vulgarities; politically it is the age of impudent and dictatorial demagogues.

It is an age of distorted values; an age in which a sexy-eyed film star earns as much money in a month as would keep a writer of genius or a great artist for his lifetime. The heterogeneous herd, which is called democracy, leading its drab existence, seeks a solace in heroine worship. It is faithful in its adulation, whether the heroine has her face lifted or her skirt lifted, or even her husband lifted. Illusions are always maintained for the mob, yet the sad fact remains that the only thing about these "stars" that is never lifted is their minds. But even the most stupid thief would not attempt to pinch a vacuum.

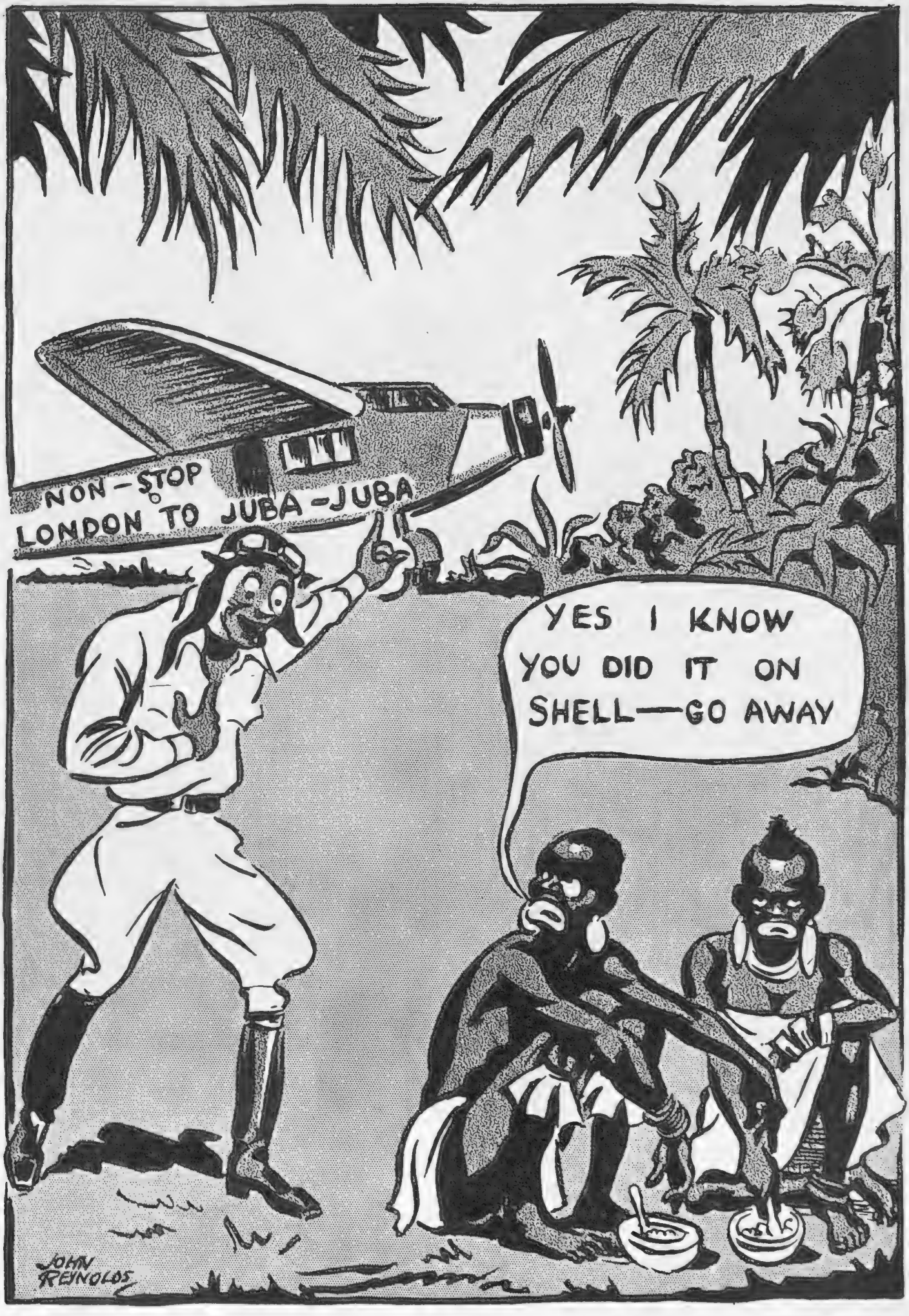
It is an age of cheap ideas and tawdry emotions; an age in which ignorance assumes arrogance, and waxworks become idols.

All of which appertains more intimately than may appear to this advertisement. Clothes are the symbols of man's mood. The herd must don its uniform; it is not permitted individuality. Its opinions, like its lounge suits, are "ready made." Hence the shoddiness of the great majority. No man of intelligence should be tempted by false economy to join these ranks and lose his character.

Pope and Bradley's clothes are made for the select minority. They are built with the sculptor's conception of form; and the mere thought of any ready-made garment is abhorrent. The figure of every man is different (as different as his finger-prints) and our cutters create a different model, and cut a special individual pattern for every customer that enters our premises. No two patterns are alike, yet each bears the indelible mark of our style. Lounge Suits from 10 Gns. Dinner Suits from 15 Gns. Dress Suits from 16 Gns.

ALLPORTS
(Established 1793)
21 & 23 Colmore Row
BIRMINGHAM
This famous Midland firm of tailors is now amalgamated with and directed by Pope & Bradley.

POPE & BRADLEY
14 OLD BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1


NON-STOP
LONDON TO JUBA-JUBA
YES I KNOW YOU DID IT ON SHELL—GO AWAY
JOHN REYNOLDS

Edwardian Elegies

New Stanzers for Old Stagers

By Frank Ford

ROUÉ

Where beauty gathered, there one found
One or more of these around,
Twirling waxed moustachio
As they ambled to and fro;
A nose for a scent, an eye for a leg,
A hand on the arm, a pardon to beg;
"But didn't we meet at Ascot last year?
—No? Well, what about dinner this evening,
My Dear?"

GAIETY GIRL

How oft we watched you kick and twirl,
So very gay, although not quite a girl;
Footlights were kind and spotlight added charm
To your shrill voice, whose Cockney balm
Will linger on, though grey the head,
And all forgot the silly things we said.
Across the years we see you once again
And hear your laughter, drowned in sweet champagne.

CABBY

'Enery was your name, but you
Were often called "Our brave Jehu,"
And, bribed with florin and cigar,
Urged onwards to the Crown and Star.
How oft you slept, with wheezy snore,
Outside some music-hall stage door,
Or ambled slowly round the park
Listening to voices in the dark.

FLOSSIE

Dear lady of the piled-up hair,
Whose back-chat cheered the Bull and Bear
At evening, when, from near and far,
Men turned toward the private bar,
Your blurred face through an upturned glass
Remains, while sterner memories pass;
Your generous heart was amply housed
In bosom vast, be-jetted and be-bloused

The best of all Xmas Presents for Men!

"Luvisca" SHIRTS SOFT COLLARS & PYJAMAS

WHETHER he has already worn them or not, every man appreciates "LUVISCA" shirts, soft collars and pyjamas —and no time is so apt for the giving as Christmas! On practically all occasions, the smooth texture and fine, fast colours are a great asset in neat, comfortable dress. You also will be gratified by the evidence of skilful tailoring and that endurance in wash and wear which all men value. A wide range of smart colourings await your choice.

SHIRTS in striped designs or plain shades including two collars **10/6** each.

PYJAMA SUITS in striped designs or plain shades **17/6** each.

Garments made to measure subject to special quotation.

LOOK FOR THE REGD. TAB: Luvisca COURTAULDS **NONE GENUINE WITHOUT.**

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ASK for and see you get "LUVISCA." There is nothing just-as-good. If any difficulty in obtaining, write COURTAULDS, Ltd. (Dept. 8M.), 16, St. Martin's-le-Grand, London, E.C.1, for name of your nearest retailer and descriptive literature.

If you are sending Christmas Cards specially printed with your name and address, make a point of asking your Stationer for TUCK'S "ROYAL and SELECTED" Sample Book

DELAY BALDNESS

A little ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL well rubbed into the scalp every day will promote the growth of the hair, it will keep it in perfect condition and impart to it a lovely glossiness.

Since 1793 the leading hair tonic.
Of all Chemists, Stores and Hairdressers.
3/6, 7/- & 10/6.
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SPEND CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR at a HONYWOOD HOTEL

and be sure of having a thoroughly enjoyable time.

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CHELTENHAM - -	Queen's Hotel.
CARDIFF - - -	Angel Hotel.
LLANDRINDOD WELLS -	Pump House Hotel.
MALVERN - - -	County Hotel.
WEYMOUTH - -	Gloucester Hotel.
LONDON - - -	Hotel Washington, Curzon Street, Mayfair.

Programmes and special inclusive terms on application to the hotel.

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You need

Allenburys Glycerine & Black Currant PASTILLES

Your Chemist Stocks Them

In tins - 2 oz. 8d., 4 oz. 1/3

The Hoofer *and the* Lady (Cont. from page i)

bed. I 'll give you my ad-dress at home, and then won't I be pleased if you 'll write to me one day soon and tell me you 're going to marry some great guy! Now, is that all right with you?"

"Of course," said Alicia, remembering she was a lady and must not show when she was conscious she had been told where she got off. "I 'm very pleased to have met you, Mr. Varconi."

"And that goes with me, too," said Mr. Dunks fervently.

Then he took the liberty of leaning forward and asking the chauffeur to stop.

The chauffeur (goodness knows what he thought about it all, but, then, he was not paid to think) opened the door for him, and he got out, and stood, hat in hand, smiling in at the still, silent Alicia.

"Well, thanks for the buggy-ride, Miss Paget. I 'm sorry I 'm a bit off my stroke to-night; non-stop sure does take it out of you. Here 's my home ad-dress. Perhaps you 'll come along to our dressing-room some time, if you 're Streatham-way (that's the place we 're going to next week) and meet the girls. They 'd love to know you. So long!"

"Good-bye," said Alicia.

She sat still, watching him crossing the road to the taxi-rank outside the station. He stopped a cab, gave a direction to the driver, and got in. She could almost feel the sigh of relief with which he collapsed into the seat.

"Where to, Madam?" asked the chauffeur, thinking this was the rummiest go he was likely to see to-night.

"I 'll tell you in a minute," sighed Alicia.

As she sat there, smiling and sighing and thinking what a silly, lonely girl she was, and how beautifully, as beautifully as any Society hostess, Mr. Dunks had handled the embarrassing situation, another car drew up beside her own.

It was the car of Colonel Trumpet.

Colonel Trumpet got out of it, and came stiffly towards her.

"Miss Paget? Thought it was. Lovely night, isn't it? Been to the Pallorpheum?"

"Yes," sighed Alicia. "I 'm just getting over something. It 's nearly gone."

The Colonel waited in silence.

"Gone?" he asked presently.

"Almost . . ."

"Gone?" he asked again, three minutes later.

"I . . . really . . . think . . . it has," said Alicia, laughing her pretty, low laugh.

"Very attractive chaps, these dancers often are," said the Colonel. "Mind if I light a cigar?"

He leaned against the closed door of Alicia's car, staring between the trunks of the trees to the glittering streets outside the Park and their skimming traffic.

"Gives a man a great attraction, that lightness on his feet. Like a Harlequin. I remember when I used to step-dance——"

"YOU?" cried Alicia, bending forward and turning huge, amazed eyes on him.

"Certainly. It 's a good while ago, now, but I used to do a lot of it at one time. Regimental concerts and that . . . silly week-end parties, too, before the war. Can't do it now, of course."

He hesitated.

"At least, it 's years."

But he moved out on to the wintry grass under the motionless black may-trees and began to dance. Slow, uncertain were the movements at first, but they quickened, and at last the Colonel was darting here and there, lightly as a boy.

"It 's really no use, on grass," he called to the petrified Alicia, "you want boards, of course. But this is how I used to do it."

And away he flew, in and out of the black shadows, his coat-tails flying and his topper at a dandy's angle.

"Colonel Trumpet," called Alicia, her voice lost between anxiety and delighted laughter, "Colonel Trumpet, you 'll get a shocking cold. The grass is wet . . ."

He did not hear her.

"'Ave a gasper?" asked the Colonel's chauffeur of Alicia's chauffeur.

"Ar—I don't mind if I do."

THE END.

By Leslie Butler

"And where would you like me to put the holly?"

Smart-Break House (Cont. from page ii)

will be issued to the Press in a day or two. My mother, of course, was a Surrey Howling."

This was more than I could stand. Nobody is more partial to a dear Duchess than I am. Nobody would go further out of his way to be civil to a member of the higher ranks of the peerage. But to be asked to take down Society jottings at the dictation of a loathsome little beast whose mother was nothing more than a Surrey Howling, it was a little too much. The Duchess I was prepared to adore. Young Francis Ritz was I prepared to respect for his profession alone. But I drew the line at the Howling cads. It was quite impossible to remain in the house a moment longer than was absolutely necessary. At the first opportunity I decided to escape. Suiting the action to the plan, therefore, I slipped away in the Rolls just in time to catch the mid-day train on Monday morning, flung myself exhausted into a first-class carriage, lit a cigar, drained a whisky flask, and sank back upon the cushions with all the sensations of a hunted convict.

As the train pulled out of the station, I was at liberty to examine a small sheet of paper which the butler had slipped as dexterously into my hand as I had slipped my fiver into his. I smoothed it out and began to read.

"Twinkelton, the ancestral butler at Chesilden," it ran, "is a rare old character. In these days, the old type of family retainer is becoming less and less common, and the Duchess of Chesilden—'Old Fishface,' as she is affectionately called in the Servants' Hall—is fortunate, indeed, in possessing such a jewel of purest ray serene in Twinkleton. Beginning life as boot-boy——"

I sighed and reflected bitterly on the snobbery of the human race. Snobs! They are all snobs, down to butlers and footmen. Talking of butlers and footmen, I must see that my people send me to the right Duchess next week-end.

THE END.

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Harvey Nichols

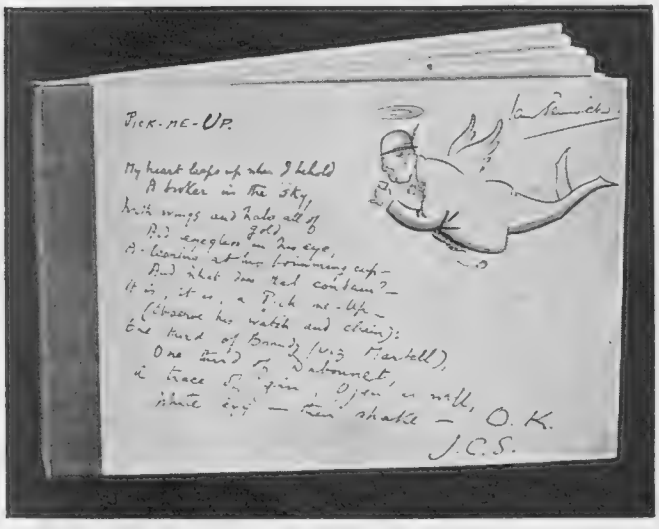
BY APPOINTMENT

SLOANE 3440

USEFUL GIFTS

(Left.)
This useful little Contract Bridge Scorer works out your score for you. One side shows Vulnerable scores, the other side, Non-Vulnerable scores. In a grey flannel case. Monogram extra 2/6

The Torch Pencil is just the thing for writing or map-reading on dark nights. It throws a strong and steady beam, the battery being in the handle. Finished in black - - 8/6



(Above.) Give this original book of Cocktail Recipes to a man. He will be amused by the queer drawings by Ian Fenwick, as well as stimulated by these potent recipes collected from every quarter of the earth by "J.C.S." 3/6

(Above.) Essential for all celebrations, these chromium-plated corkscrews are perfectly balanced and, being so decorative, can be kept anywhere, ready to hand.
Left to Right: Derby Winner, Barking Dog, Scottie 5/- *Each*

These smart, modern Initials are made to order, in any two colours in lacquer, on a plain bar brooch. Ideal for your dress, scarf or bag. Navy/White, Brown/Ivory, etc. 10/6

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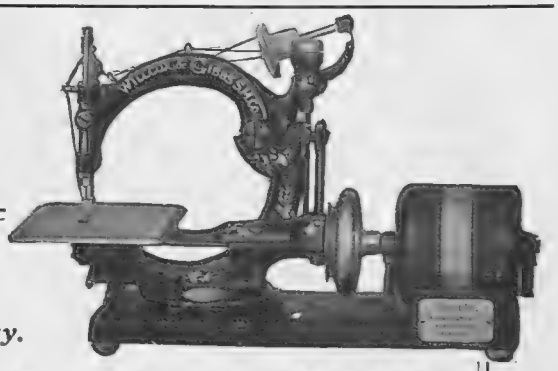

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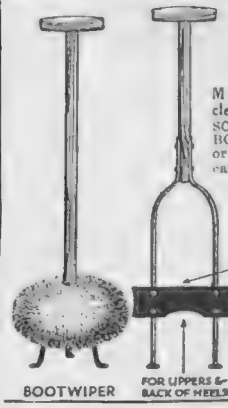

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HEADACHES	ASTHMA	HAY FEVER	MALARIA
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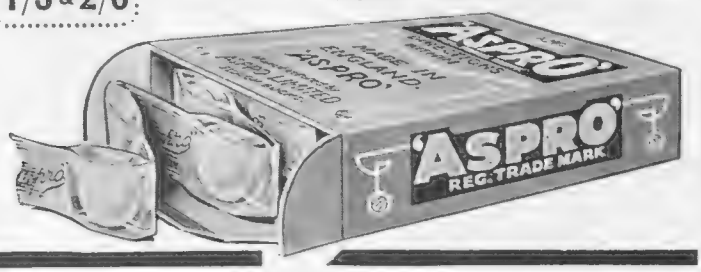

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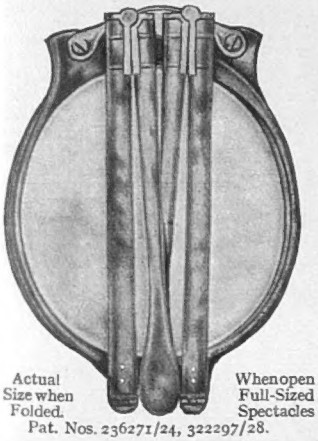

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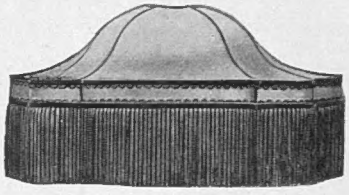

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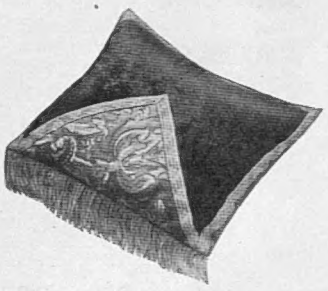

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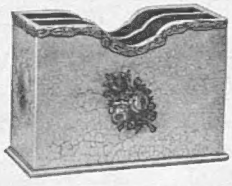

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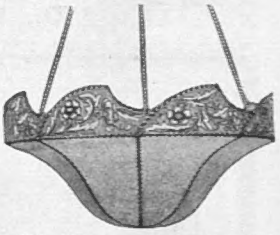

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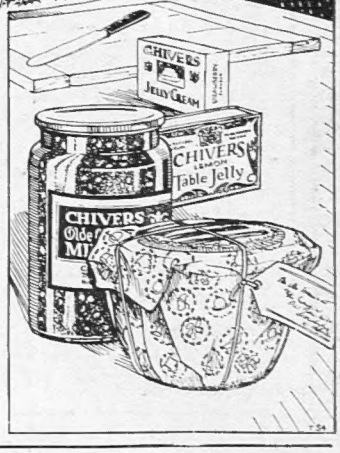

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